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A William Fox Production. *Mother Ma*

THE DEAREST POSSESSION OF A MOTHER'S HEART.

The Story of Mother Machree

A STORY OF A MOTHER'S LOVE

BY

RIDA JOHNSON YOUNG

ILLUSTRATED WITH SCENES
FROM THE PHOTOPLAY
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THE STORY OF MOTHER MACHREE

A Story of a Mother's Love

CHAPTER I

THERE was no candle in the window of the little house with the broken thatch. She who had kept it there, always burning for her children, was gone.

There was no flicker of a hearth fire, either, through the panes of the little crooked windows. They looked blind, those pitiful windows, as if the fire had been the soul of them. Now that it had fled, they could no longer reflect the beauty of the world, nor hint, with cheerful winkings, of the snug comfort inside, with the world shut out.

In the gray twilight a few curlews circled above the house, uttering little plaintive cries. They flew low, seeming to be bound down, not free, held to the earth by the weight of the hurrying clouds, which

threatened each moment to dissolve into rain—or tears, Ellen McHugh thought, as she watched the birds—tears for the sorrow and loneliness of the world.

She had come up the long road from her own desolated home—the road that went along the shore, where the mist from the sea hung low and palpable, curling the stray wisps of hair on her bare head. Her little head shawl was pinned about the shoulders of Brian, the small lad who came along with her, holding to the skirt of her dress and whimpering a bit from discomfort and hunger.

She had come to her childhood's home, hoping for the comfort of feeling her dead mother's presence there, as sometimes she had sensed it; but it seemed only coming from desolation to despair. The deserted house was nearer the shore than her own, more bare, for the lack of brush about it, more exposed to the wide terror of the sea. Behind it the empty downs seemed to accentuate its isolation. No blessed spirit

would haunt the place that wild night, she feared.

Michael, her husband, had often told her that it was ignorant superstition which made her feel that sometimes her mother came back to comfort her. Perhaps it was. Michael had been a well educated man, far above her in many ways. She hadn't his book learning, but she sensed things sometimes—big things, not to be found in any printed word.

She lifted the latch of the little sagging door and went into the house. It was very chill, colder than outside, and the musty smell of years of smoking peat hung heavy on the air.

The boy held back, pulling at her skirt.

"What for, mither? What for be you going in grandmither's house? It's cold and dark," he said.

"Don't say 'be you going,' darlin'. And you must say 'mother.' Your father tells you time and again. He doesn't favor the brogue."

"But he's dead, father is. Isn't father dead?"

"All the more reason," said Ellen, "that you should please him, and do as he willed when he was here."

The child couldn't understand this. He stood by the open door, afraid to go out alone or to come in with her. His mother went to the cold hearth, and sat upon a worn cutty stool there, her head in her hands.

The whimper that he had tried to stifle all the way on the long road broke into an open cry. He was only a little lad, around five years or so. He was tired and cold and hungry, and bewildered, too, by the sad proceedings of the day. His father had been placed in a long box and laid away in the little churchyard—his father, to whom people took off their caps as they did to the squire—his father, who was very severe, and yet had unbent at times and had ridden the boy upon his foot to Banbury Cross.

Ellen lifted her face, down which the tears were streaming, and put out her arms to the lad.

"Come over, darlin'," she said. "Come to mother's knee, while I warm you awhile."

The lad came to her, crying loudly, his mouth stretched in an agony of misery from the discomfort of the cold and his empty stomach and the many things which he could not understand. His mother cuddled him in her arms, bidding him be quiet for a spell, and she would take him home again.

The sobs ceased abruptly. He was a good child, and patient with the pathetic patience of the children of the very poor.

Presently she began to talk to him—crooning, just above a breath, more as if she were talking to herself.

"Your father was a gentleman, Brian—never forget that. He was a schoolmaster—mind you that! Maybe it was but in the hedges he taught, with no pay but a few petaties and a bag o' meal, and maybe

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sometimes a flitch o' bacon. He was a schoolmaster, for all of that, with as much learning to the inside of his head as those that teach in the big schools in Dublin, with a roof over their heads and real pay to it. The McHughs are not to be sneezed at, Brian lad. They're gentlefolks away back, and had land of their own; and he was always plannin' to make a scholar of you and a gentleman, and that's what's before us to do, lad. I promised your father on his deathbed, some way or another, I'd make a scholar and a gentleman of you!"

"And I'll have oatcake and bacon every day!" said Brian, vastly comforted by the prospect.

"Oatcake and bacon every day," his mother repeated absently. "Be quiet a bit now, and see if I can hear some word will tell me which way to turn."

They were very quiet for a long time—so quiet that Brian fell asleep on his mother's breast.

The night gathered and grew more chill.

Through the open door the mist blew in from the sea. There was no sound, to mortal ears, save the rustling of the wind in the thatch and the thunder of the surf on the shore; but Ellen was comforted and counseled.

Who shall say what voice reached her inner hearing? Who shall say what guidance fixed her half formed purpose of somehow making her way to America, the land of promise—the land where Brian could have his chance with the best to be a scholar and a gentleman? At any rate, the silent hours in her mother's house resulted in this determination. She would go to America! She would give Brian his chance!

It was an hour or more before she rose, with the sleeping child in her arms, and stood for a moment in silent farewell, her eyes trying to find the dearly familiar outlines of the room, her ears strained for the sound of a voice which would have bidden her Godspeed wherever she went. All around was dark and silence. The wild,

black night outside seemed light by comparison, as she went into it; clasping the child tightly and bending her body to the wind.

In those days—some time in the forties, it was—going to America was not the light and easy adventure it is now. It was an undertaking to be looked at this way and that, and well talked over and considered.

Ellen knew that her neighbors would try to dissuade her from her purpose, if she spoke of it. A lone woman with a child, and only a few pennies in her purse! And the thousands of miles to go, with the great sea to be crossed! They'd have both the priest and the minister at her, day and night —she knew that. Maybe they would persuade her to take her comfort, as she could find it, among her own people, and to abandon Brian to a life of poverty and ignorance.

It was a hard thing to do, but she decided to slip away in the morning, while

the determination was hot within her, without a word to any one.

After a sleepless night, she rose with the dawn and made her simple preparations for departure. There was little to do. Her few poor sticks of furniture must be left behind, of course, and they would make up to the landlord for the rent which was overdue.

When they had finished their meager breakfast, there was still half an oatcake left, besides some meal and a few potatoes. These she put in a rush basket, which she gave to Brian to carry. Then she made a bundle of their scanty possessions, and, slinging it over her shoulder, set out upon the great adventure.

CHAPTER II

ELLEN had determined to go first to Dublin. It was a long way from Ballymoney, clear through County Wicklow, but she had a brother there, apprenticed to a cooper. She thought that perhaps he could help her to get to America.

It was a bright, clear morning—one of those rare days which have made Ireland the jewel isle of song and story, not the cold, misty land, dank and cheerless, which it is for two hundred and more days of the year. These perfect days are the ones which Ireland's sons, who have left her, remember. They forget the others, and the dark and cold and sadness of them.

Ellen and Brian stepped briskly along the shore road. Brian capered with delight. They were going somewhere, away from the sadness and tears, out into the great world where anything might happen. Mother had

said they were going to America. He guessed they'd be there before night, and be happy ever after!

By noon they had gone as far as the outskirts of Arklow. From a hill they could see the chimneys of that snug little town.

"Is it America, Mother Machree?" asked Brian.

Mother Machree! How sweet that name sounded from the boy's lips! "Mother, my darling," it meant. 'Twas so her husband had called her often, after Brian had come to them.

She sighed, and put her hand upon the lad's head caressingly.

"No! No! 'Tis a long ways from America yet. We'll have to cross the broad seas to get there; but we're on our way, Brian, and you're not to grow weary nor give up, however hard the road."

"I won't," said Brain stoutly; "but I'm hungry now."

"We'll go down there where you see the

little stream," said Ellen, "and have a bite from the basket, and a sup of the cold water. We'll be needin' it after the long walk."

Brian ran before her, down the hill, to where there was a thick growth of ash trees about a dancing stream. Behind the trees he found a cart standing—a curiously painted cart with a hood over the back half of it. A piebald horse, released from the shafts, was grazing near it.

Farther along he saw three people seated about a fire, upon which a pot was boiling. They were such unusual-looking people that Brian halted and drew back, afraid, and waited for his mother to come. He peered through the brush at the strange group around the fire.

There was a boy—or was it a man no taller than a boy? Short and thick he was, with legs that bowed out, as he busied himself about the fire. He wore a strange doublet of patchwork in bright colors, and green stockings wrinkled upon his misshapen legs.

Stretched flat upon the ground there was a long man—as long as a rake, thought Brian, and almost as thin. He, too, was attired unconventionally, in a clinging garment of red, like an undershirt and drawers sewn together. His boots were off, and he was kicking his big bare feet in the air.

The third man was not so unusual in appearance, and was clad in more conventional garb; but he had a quantity of fierce-looking black hair, which hung down to his shoulders and dangled before his eyes.

Presently Brian's mother came from behind the ash trees, and she, too, started aback and stared at the three strange men. The little man—or was it a boy?—turned and saw her.

"Good day," he called, in a piping voice.

Brian ran to his mother, and clung tightly to her hand. The long, thin man sat up. The black-haired one turned about and looked at them.

"Well! Well!" he cried, and his voice boomed so loudly that Ellen and the boy

were affrighted by it. "Welcome to our sylvan retreat!"

"I only wanted—" said Ellen, stammering. "We're making the road to Dublin, and we thought to have a bite to eat by the stream. We wouldn't wish to intrude upon you."

She spoke primly. It somehow reminded Brian of the way his father had used to speak.

"Intrude, is it?" said the black-haired man. "Sure and it's God's free world! Come over and have a loan of our fire, and brew your tea along with us!"

"I haven't any tea," said Ellen, approaching bashfully. "I only wanted the water."

"No tea? No tea?" boomed the man. "Then you must share ours. 'Tis good and black and bitter from long brewin'."

Ellen protested, but there was no refusing the good-natured kindliness of the man. Presently she and Brian were seated about the fire, very much surprised and a little

perturbed by the strange company in which they found themselves.

"'Tis a traveling show we are," explained the man, noting that the girl could scarcely look at them for embarrassment, and that the child's eyes were wide with wonder! "This here is Pips the Dwarf. Yon's the Kilkenny Giant, and myself, I'm the Golden Harpist o' Wexford."

The dwarf acknowledged the introduction by making a face at them and turning a handspring. The Kilkenny Giant nodded silently, and began to pull on his boots, which had thick soles and prodigious heels. As if he could make himself decent for company in that way, thought Ellen, dressed in his underclothes as he was! She had never seen tights before.

"And so you and your little brother are off to Dublin?" asked the harpist.

"It's not my brother—'tis my own child he is. Brian McHugh is his name."

The harpist looked as if he could scarce believe this.

"You seem overyoung to be havin' a big boy the likes of that. It couldn't be you are a widdy woman?"

"I am that," said Ellen.

The dwarf had given her a pewter cup of black tea. She sipped it. It seemed delicious. It was long since she had tasted tea.

"Have ye come far?" the man asked.

"From Ballymoney," answered Ellen. "I'm hopin' my brother in Dublin will help me to get to America."

"America!" exclaimed the harpist. "That's no place for a fine young woman like you, with your good looks and the mark of real gentlefolks upon you! They'll be making a hired girl of you over there, and puttin' all manner of slights on you!"

Ellen raised her head proudly.

"They'll make no hired girl of me!" she said, with spirit. "I'm a great hand at fine sewing and knitting."

The harpist shook his head.

"They'll make a hired girl of you," he persisted. "They do it to all that goes

there, and there's no risin' above it once you've started into it, for all their grand talk of democracy and one bein' as good as another!"

"I have a brother that's in America," said the Kilkenny Giant.

He spoke very solemnly, in a deep voice which seemed to come from his boots. Ellen forced herself to look in his direction. It was very uncomfortable to be addressed by a man clad in garments which one usually hid decently from the public gaze.

"Once I had a letter from him," the giant went on. "All the way from America I had a letter. He said it was fine there. He said he was eatin' meat every day but Friday, and could then, if he would. He wrote me word of a man by the name of Barnum would give something for a big felly like me, to show off to the folks over there."

He looked askance at the harpist, who flared into sudden anger.

"You're gettin' more than you're worth now!" he snapped. "Share and share alike,

and you as thin as a herrin'—no proper giant at all!"

"I'm seven foot two without me boots," said the giant defensively.

The dwarf joined issue with the harpist, and jeered:

"Small good you are at all to the show, with never a trick nor a caper to you! Share and share alike is too much, only to stand up and be gaped at. Not even a jig to the foot of you! I'm worth two of him for bringing in the pennies!"

To prove his assertion, the dwarf picked up a long knife from the ground and seemed to swallow it, bringing it out again at the pit of his stomach.

"Could ye do that, ye might be talkin' of bein' showed off in America!"

The giant seemed much abashed.

I wasn't sayin' I was going to America," he said, a trifle sulkily; "though there might be them there would appreciate me better than here."

"And that wouldn't be much!" the harp-

ist and dwarf exclaimed, almost in unison.

They wouldn't allow Ellen to take any of the food from her basket, but insisted upon her and Brian sharing the rabbit stew which was simmering upon the fire.

"Though 'tis not much of a stew," said the harpist. "My wife, she who was called the Whistling Hen, could make a rabbit stew would stand next to a stuffed peacock on the table of the lord mayor; but I lost her awhile since, and we do the best we can."

"I'm sorry for you," said Ellen, looking at him gently. "Death, 'tis hard!"

"Oh, it wasn't that way I lost her. She ran away with the other giant. That's the reason I have to put up with *him*."

He motioned with his thumb toward the Kilkenny Giant, who looked abashed and apologetic. Ellen felt sorry for the man.

"He's very tall," she said politely. "I don't know as I ever saw a higher man."

"Tall is all right," the harpist agreed grudingly; "but thick and tall is the way

they like 'em. He's no proper giant at all, but I had me handbills printed, and I had to be takin' the best I could find. Giants are as scarce in Ireland as snakes. I don't know but what St. Patrick had a word to say to them, too. The other giant would have made two of him, and he could jig, and had a great way with the ladies."

The harpist sighed reminiscently.

"He must have had!" thought Ellen, with the first gleam of humor lighting her mind for many a day.

"If you could cook, now!" The harpist looked up at her questioningly through his shaggy locks. "We're making the road to Dublin ourselves. We'd give you and the lad a lift in the cart, and welcome, just to have a woman's hand at the cooking again."

Ellen looked at him doubtfully. It would never do, she thought. Michael wouldn't like it at all, could he look down and see her traveling the road with show folks; but what a help it would be! The way was so long!

A William Fox Production

Mother Mad

"Of course she can cook. I can tell by the looks of her," said the dwarf.

"I can cook fine," Ellen assented, "when there's anything to cook, but—"

"You'll find no lack that way with us," the harpist interrupted eagerly. "We spend a bit of money between us when we come to the towns; and in the country, what are game laws to come between an honest man and his dinner?"

"That's true," said Ellen gravely, turning over in her mind the matter of staying with them. "Nobody would begrudge you a rabbit or a bird now and then, I'm sure."

"Nor a sucking pig, neither," said Pips, grinning, "should one be running around loose and wild like."

Thereupon the dwarf turned a flip-flap and ran about on all fours, squealing like a young pig before the knife. His antics made them all laugh heartily, except the giant, who seemed not to see much humor in anything.

A good laugh shared goes a long way to

putting folks at ease with one another. In a few moments Ellen found herself thanking the harpist for his offer of a lift to Dublin, and assuring him that she would do her best to be useful by the way.

CHAPTER III

AFTER the meal was done, Ellen insisted upon washing the pots and the few battered pewter dishes in the stream, while the men stamped out the fire and hitched the piebald horse to the cart. Then she and Brian were helped to mount over the wheel, and were seated upon a bare plank which ran across the back under the hood. There was a small harp behind them in a green baize cover. Pips squatted in the straw on the floor of the cart. The giant sat with the harpist on the driving seat.

It was strange company, Ellen thought, for her boy and herself to be in. She was glad they were far from Ballymoney, so that no one they knew would see them; but it meant getting to Dublin and being fed by the way, so the arrangement began to look like a very lucky chance to her.

It was not so pleasant when they came

to Arklow, for the people began to come out of their houses to stare at them, and small boys followed them along the road. It was very disagreeable indeed when the cart halted and the harpist descended and began to harrangue the crowd in his booming voice. The giant stood up on the driving seat, widening the stretch of his legs, so that Pips could thrust his head between them and grimace and wink at the crowd.

Ellen's face burned. The people stared at her, too, and at Brian, as if they expected them to contribute in some way to the entertainment.

The harp was taken from its covering and handed down by Pips, who made a great show of letting it fall. At last he did fall with it, over the side of the cart, landing on his feet like a cat.

The harpist played some simple airs—old-fashioned things which delighted the people. Pips swallowed knives, stuck pins in his ears and nostrils, and turned flip-flaps, to the accompaniment of "oh's" and

"ah's" and delighted laughter. The giant leaned over the side of the cart and shook hands with little boys and girls, who saw him much bigger than he was at that height. He was very solemn, too, which made him seem much more gigantic and frightening.

It was a simple entertainment, but evidently very satisfying to those unsophisticated country folk. There were quite a number of pennies in the hat which Pips passed about, and those who had no penny gave a blessing, which was received as gratefully by Pips as if it were a bag of gold.

"May it come back to you," he would say, "and doubled!"

Pennies or blessings, it seemed all the same to Pips, although he squabbled fiercely enough over an odd penny when they had come out into the country again and stopped to divide the takings. They came near to an open fight, the three of them, until the giant suggested that the odd penny should be given to Brian. This being agreeable to the others, Brian got the penny, much to his

amazement and delight. He had never had a penny of his own before.

It was a slow journey they made to Dublin, stopping wherever the smallest audience could be gathered together, and dallying for long hours over their food, in the preparation of which Ellen grew wonderfully skillful. She preformed prodigious culinary feats with nothing but an old skillet and a copper kettle to her hand. They were three weeks upon the way.

At night Ellen and Brian slept in the straw at the bottom of the cart. The men had slept there before, side by side, letting down the dashboard for the giant's feet to stick out behind; but now they gathered their cloaks about them and slept upon the ground. They discounted sore muscles by contented stomachs, and felt no loss in the bargain.

Soon her strange traveling companions began to seem like old friends to Ellen—especially the Kilkenny Giant, who rarely spoke, but who showed her many little

kindnesses. He was Brain's favorite, too. Sometimes he would take the lad between his knees upon the driving seat, and Brian would feel very important, being "made over" by a real giant, like *Hop-o'-My-Thumb* in the old tale his father used to tell him.

On the outskirts of Dublin they came to an inn, a shabby place at which they were evidently habitual visitors. The landlord, a very little man in a nightcap, greeted them effusively. He told them he had been on the lookout for them for days. Their usual accommodations were all ready for them, he said—sweet, clean hay in the stable loft for them to sleep upon.

He looked askance at the Kilkenny Giant, who was evidently a stranger to him, and was quite taken aback when Ellen and Brian stepped down from the cart.

"Is it a new woman ye have?" he asked, looking at the harpist accusingly. "What's come o' the Whistling Hen?"

The harpist took the landlord aside, and

explained the situation to him. There was much whispering and nudging and bargaining. The harpist displayed the little bag of pennies which he carried in the bosom of his waistcoat. It was finally arranged between them that Ellen was to have a room in the inn itself, like the real lady that she was.

"I thank you kindly," said Ellen, when the showman came to the back of the cart, where she was tying up her bundle, and told her that he had arranged accommodations for her; "but we mustn't put upon you for any further kindness. I'm off to seek my brother. You've been a real friend to me and the lad, and we'll never forget you for it—you, nor the others," she added, seeing the giant and Pips standing by with very long faces.

There were expostulations and protests, but Ellen was resolute. They had brought her to Dublin, and she was thankful to them; but as for her staying with the show, as they evidently expected, it was out of the question. She didn't tell them, but her

inmost thought was that this vagabond life was a bad start for Brian on his road to being a scholar and a gentleman.

She had her brother's address tied in a bit of ribbon pinned to the bosom of her gown, together with a garnet brooch which had been her mother's and a silver-gilt locket that her husband had bought her at a fair, when he was courting her. She showed the address to the landlord.

"Peter Wiley's cooperage?" he said. "Sure an' I know it well! It's a piece of a way—maybe as much as a mile up this road, and you come to a slaughterhouse. Ye turn there to the right, and the way is straight into the city itself. If ye keep askin' and go straight, ye can't miss Peter Wiley's."

It was hard to say good-by to her three good friends, especially with Brian making such a to-do about it. He clung to the Kilkenny Giant, kicking and screaming in revolt, the tears running down his cheeks.

"I'll go a bit of the way with you," said

the giant. "Since he'll not leave go of me leg, maybe he'll come along with it!"

The boy, at that, left his hold of the giant's leg and ran toward the stables, whither the piebald horse had been led, looking very much surprised at being stabled after so many weeks of freedom. Brian ran to the end of the stall and screamed defiance at them. The old horse shied away from him, frightened by the uproar.

"I never knew he had it in him to behave in such a way," said Ellen, abashed. "He was always a good lad. Brian," she said, peering at him from under the horse's legs, "have you forgotten your father—how he wanted you to be a scholar and a gentleman?"

"I want to be a giant!" wailed Brian.

It took a long time to persuade him to come out, and there had to be false promises of bringing him back again, and true promises of being allowed to spend his penny in Dublin; but at length they were on their way down the long road to the city.

CHAPTER IV

BRIAN carried the rush basket, which the harpist had filled to repletion, and Ellen had her bundle slung over her shoulder—just as they had started from Ballymoney, only now they were much heartened by the good food and companionship they had had along the way. The showmen stood at the door of the inn, and waved to them each time they looked back. When they had gone a good piece down the road, Ellen saw that the Kilkenny Giant had left his companions and was following them.

When they reached the slaughterhouse, and turned to the right, they found themselves upon a road on which the houses were closer and closer together as they went along. Ellen had never seen so many houses in a row, nor so many people. They were not in Dublin proper at all, but it seemed

already a great city to her, and very confusing.

Glancing over her shoulder, she saw that the Kilkenny Giant was not far behind them and that some urchins had gathered at his heels. No wonder, she thought, striding the streets like a giraffe in underwear! She was ashamed of her pride as she quickened her pace to keep as far away from him as possible. He was a good, kind friend, but too striking to be seen with, walking the streets of Dublin. She hoped that Brian would not look behind and see him.

The boy, who seemed to have forgotten his grief in the many unaccustomed sights and sounds of the city, trotted along cheerfully enough, his eyes big with wonder.

"Is this America, Mother Machree?" he asked.

"No, Brian Dhu," she answered. "This is not America, but we're on the way to it, my boy!"

Ellen felt timid about asking questions.

The farther they went, the closer the houses were. The road turned presently into a cobbled street, and there were many carts dashing about, and a great stir and noise on all sides, which confused her.

She paused at a street crossing, looking vaguely about, and suddenly found herself the center of a yelling, laughing mob. The Kilkenny Giant had caught up with them, the crowd at his heels.

"The cooperage is just a piece farther," he said. "The cooper lives in the big red house up beyont, and the shop is behint it. Go you with the boy alone," he added, with rare delicacy. "I'll hold these rapscallions at my heels."

He turned and executed a grave and unaccustomed caper for the edification of his followers, while Ellen scuttled across the street, dragging Brian, protesting, with her. The boy wanted to stay with the giant and hear the crowd laugh.

A sound of tapping, like a thousand woodpeckers at work, came from behind the

big red house, where the name "Peter Wiley" was on a brass plate at the door.

It wouldn't do to be knocking at the front door, Ellen thought, for the house looked very grand to her, with curtains at the windows, and all—better than the squire's house at Ballymoney, by a long ways.

She opened a little gate by the side of the house, and went down a bare alleyway to the back. She passed into a large garden, beyond which there was a long, low structure, with rows of new barrels and kegs and wooden pails piled symmetrically at the front of it.

The tapping was almost frightening as she drew nearer. Then, as she came to the open door of the shop and looked in, the noise died away gradually down the long room, as one lad after another rested his mallet to gaze on the lovely face looking in at the door.

They were all young lads, with bare bodies, except for their pantaloons. There was Denny, the next to the last in the row,

grinning with a dawning look of recognition in his gray eyes.

"Ellen! Ellen!" he shouted.

He jumped like a frog over the barrels and staves in his way, and caught her in his arms. Ellen wept with joy at the feel of the tight clasp. It was good, finding one of her own, and getting a glad welcome from him!

The apprentices, after the manner of youth the world over, fell to embracing one another in mock ecstasy. They thought Ellen was a sweetheart of Denny's. She looked young enough for it, though she was four years his senior.

"What's this? What's going on here?" a harsh voice behind them demanded.

A stern, hard-faced man confronted Ellen as she withdrew from Denny's arms.

" 'Tis my sister, come from Ballymoney," shouted Denny, over the roar of the mallets which the apprentices had hastily resumed.

"Let her not come in work hours, then!"

bawled Wiley, the cooper. "Let her go along with herself now!"

"I'll take me half holiday this day," pleaded Denny, "and do without for two weeks to come."

Wiley looked at him from under frowning brows, but he was always one to accept a bargain that was to his advantage.

"Along with you, then," he said. "See you be back by five o'clock, or you'll get no tea!"

Wiley strode into the shop with never a look at Ellen or the boy.

Denny hastily donned his shirt and jacket, which were hanging on a nail in the shop, and in a few moments the three of them were through the alley and out in the street, away from the noise.

They paused for a moment outside the gate, for Denny to become acquainted with Brian, and to realize that he was an uncle. He laughed delightedly at the wonder of it, and tossed the boy up in his strong arms. Then he took them to the back room of an

A William Fox Production. *Mother Machree.*

alehouse on the corner, where they could talk in peace.

The Kilkenny Giant was nowhere in sight. Ellen was shamefacedly glad of that, and a bit regretful, too. She would have liked to thank him for his watchfulness over them.

There was much to talk of over the veal and ham pie and the mugs of ale which Denny ordered so grandly. Ellen thought he must have plenty, to be spending money like that; but she soon learned that it was all he had. It was the very last of the Christmas money which the cooper was bound by agreement to give the apprentices on that day. The lads got their bed and board, but nothing else through the long year; and Ellen soon realized that there was slight prospect of being helped to America by Denny's slim resources.

While they were talking, the door opened, and the Kilkenny Giant strode in. He had bought himself a secondhand greatcoat, which came a little below his knees. Except for his height, and the expanse of red

tights between his boot tops and the end of the shabby coat, he looked more like a reasonable human being than before.

He was greeted with a shout of delight from Brian. In a moment he was introduced to Denny, who invited him to sit at the table with them—which he did, doubling up like a jackknife, and not looking so bad with the greatcoat hiding his thinness and the red tights under the table. Brian climbed upon his knees, and was very happy, though it was like sitting on two sharp fence rails.

The question of America was brought up. Denny was resourceful. He agreed with Ellen that America was the place for her and the lad, and he saw a way to getting her there. His apprenticeship would be ended in a few months, but he could bind himself for a term of years to Wiley with wages. Wiley would perhaps give part of the money in advance, to get a good trained man cheap.

Ellen refused this sacrifice at first, but Denny explained that he would bind him-

self somewhere—to Wiley or another, what matter?

He carried the whole thing off lightly, telling her that she could send him gold in payment, from America, where they said it could be picked up in the streets. His money with interest, she could send him, in no time at all!

The Kilkenny Giant agreed with Denny. There were rare chances for a person who could get to America, he said.

And so the matter was arranged, and in three days Ellen and Brian were on a little ship, sailing out of Dublin Bay to Liverpool, on their way to the land of promise. Denny went back cheerfully to a hated servitude, remembering the look of gratitude and hope on his sister's face as she waved to him from the ship's rail.

Ellen stood there for a long time by the ship's railing, with Brian's hand held tightly in hers, and gazed at the diminishing shore until it grew small and far away. Then she turned and looked about her,

where there were many rough people squatted upon the deck in groups, opening parcels of food, and handing black bottles about.

She raised her eyes to the deck above her head, and saw there a very tall man in a sailor's blue pants, which he did not need to roll up, as the wide flap of them came only to the calf of his legs. He was mopping the deck with a long-handled brush, and looking down at her the while, with something like a grin on his solemn face. It was the Kilkenny Giant!

"You?" she cried.

"Sure! I'm on me way to America," he shouted. I'm going to see that felly by the name of Barnum!"

CHAPTER V

THERE was no gold to be picked up on the streets of New York—Ellen soon found that out. It was a hard place—harder than Ballymoney, because there she had friends, and when the great folks were at the castle there was always fine sewing to do and to be well paid for.

The little store of money which Denny had forced upon her, over the price of her passage on the ship, wouldn't keep them long, she knew, even in the very poor room on the top floor of the miserable tenement in which they lived. The Kilkenny Giant had found the place for her, and then had disappeared. It was more than three weeks since she had seen him. She felt very much alone and frightened in the big, busy city, where no one noticed her, or spoke a kind word to her, from morning to night.

The Emigrant Association had taken her

name, and had promised to find sewing for her to do; but each day, when she went to the office, she was told that there was nothing for her as yet.

Slowly a disquieting conviction forced itself upon her—she must be a hired girl, as the harpist had predicted. There was a great demand for good strong girls from the old country. Michael wouldn't like it, could he look down—she knew that. He had always held himself, and her, too, far above even the servants at the castle, with all their fine airs and smart clothes; but there was no help for it.

She didn't believe, as the harpist had said, that there was no rising above it. It would be only for a short while, she thought, until she could save enough money to wait for more fitting employment. So she put her name down on the books of the Emigrant Association as an applicant for general housework.

There was an unforeseen difficulty about this, too. No one seemed to want a girl

with a child to take in with her. She suspected that some of the housewives she saw didn't believe in the wedding ring upon her finger. They looked at her and the boy askance. Her striking beauty was against her, too. They made it very evident that they thought her a light woman who had been cast aside with her child.

She didn't look strong enough, either—not for the way people worked the hired girls in those days.

Every day they gave her names and addresses. Every day she trailed long miles over the city, starting out with high hopes in the morning, and returning unsuccessful and in despair at night. Nobody wanted her.

She began to be frightened. There seemed to be bad luck upon her, no matter which way she turned.

One morning, in the fourth week of her discouraging life in New York, as she was starting out once more to look for work—taking Brian with her, as usual, for she was

fearful to leave him alone—she encountered the Kilkenny Giant upon the doorstep, just raising his hand to knock, as she opened the door.

She would scarcely have known him, except for the height of him. He was clad in a suit of butternut cloth, which must have been cut for him especially, as it fitted him all the way down, the trousers being drawn by a strap under his shoes. Upon his head he wore a high hat with a wide brim, and there was a muffler drawn close about his throat.

"Well, and how are you doin'?" he said calmly, as if he had left them the day before.

Stooping, he lifted Brian, who was clamoring for attention to his shoulder. Brian clasped him tightly about the throat.

"Easy!" he said, flinching a bit. "There's a sore spot I still have on the neck of me. How are you doin'?" he repeated, looking down at Ellen.

"Not so well; but I see you are coming

on grand, with your new suit and all."

"I've had a hard time—a very hard time," said the giant darkly. "Strange things has happened me. Will we go up to your place for a talk?"

"Of course! Come in," said Ellen.

She led the way up the stairs, the giant following, with Brian still seated upon his shoulder.

"I feared we had seen the last of you," she said, as they went into the little bare room at the very top of the house, where there were no windows, and only a gray light came through the dusty skylight above.

"I thought I had seen the last of meself," answered the giant gloomily, as he folded himself like a yardstick upon the edge of the bed.

"From the looks of your new suit and all, I was thinking maybe you'd met up with Barnum himself!"

"Yes—that's it! I met up with Barnum!" He sighed dismally. "I was showed off last night for the first time. For two

weeks he had me laid by the heels with three sailormen sticking me with needles 'twould curdle your blood to look at!"

"What? Sticking you with needles?"

Ellen thought the poor man was out of his head.

"He said I hadn't the proper heft for a giant—like the harpist o' Wexford told me long ago, but I wouldn't have the sense to believe him. It's the tattooed living skelington I am now. Bozo, from Brazil, it is I am!"

He looked ready to fall to weeping. Pulling the muffler slightly away from his throat, he displayed a bright butterfly fluttering daintily across his Adam's apple.

"The soreness is all gone," he continued, "except one spot by me ear; but I'm tellin' you I wouldn't go through it again, not for double the twenty dollars a week I'm gettin'."

"Oh, my!"

Ellen could find no further words to express her astonishment at the prodigious

amount of twenty dollars a week and the method of obtaining it.

"There's scarce a inch of me not covered, and it'll never come off—never so long as I live!" He seemed to take a gloomy satisfaction in his plight. "They've got me picture painted on the front of the museum, larger than life, and thinner, too!" A hint of pride crept into his voice at this. "Could the Harpist o' Wexford see that—me picture painted in the face of all Broadway to look at!"

"But you shouldn't have let them!" said Ellen. "To go through life with butterflies on you that will never come off!"

"Mr. Barnum said I was no proper giant, like I told you, but he was real took with the thinness and longness of me. When he saw me stripped, he like to have laughed the head off him."

"I want to see the butterfly again," said Brian, pulling at the muffler.

"There's a snake on me chest, too," said

the giant aggrievedly, as he took off the muffler and opened his shirt a bit to show it. "Did I know it was a snake while they were doing it, I wouldn't have had it; but now it's there, there's nothing to do about it. Anyways, it's not billed from Ireland I am. 'Tis from Brazil he says I come, and maybe there's snakes there, I shouldn't wonder."

The giant seemed very unhappy about the whole thing, but there was a curious pride about him, too, which made Ellen inclined to laugh in spite of her sympathy with him.

"What I came for is this," he said abruptly. "The half lady fell sick last night with the smallpox."

"The half lady?"

"She's a whole lady that sits in a place with looking-glasses about, and those that's outside can see no farther down than the middle of her, so she looks to be cut in half, as it might be. I thought maybe, if you'd come with me to see Mr. Barnum,

he might be givin' you the chance to be the half lady."

Ellen looked at him wide-eyed, not clearly understanding.

"She must have good looks to her," he explained, "and must not be known in the city. He was thinking he'd have to send away for another one, but I tellt him to bide till he laid eyes on you, and he's waitin' for you."

"Oh, I couldn't! With people looking at me!"

"There'd be fifteen dollars every week in it for you!"

Fifteen dollars! Enough to keep them grandly and send Brian to school, she thought.

"You have only to sit in the place with the looking-glasses, and smile and look pleasant when the crowd passes. The other one was a light trollop, and used to be passing the wink to the boys, but he wouldn't be askin' that of you."

Fifteen dollars every week! It would

give Brian his chance! It would be wicked, not fair to the child, to refuse it.

"Very well, then," she said, making up her mind at once. "A half lady, is it? If he'll have me, I'll be it!"

As they started out for their walk uptown to Broadway and Ann Street, there was but one thought in Ellen's mind—Brian could go to school now. She knew the very place for him! On Bank Street, it was—a neat little red brick house with a sign by the door which read:

Miss Van Studdiford's School for Little Ladies and Gentlemen.

That was the place for Brian, if Mr. Barnum consented to accept her as the half lady. It was there, no doubt, that the little ones were taught the ways of gentlefolk. It would be putting Brian on the way that his father had wished him to go—learning to be a scholar and a gentleman at one and the same time!

CHAPTER VI

BARNUM'S big museum was very frightening when they came to it. It was a huge structure with hundreds of windows, between which there were gaudily colored pictures of the wonders inside. Flags flew all along the top of it.

The giant pointed out his own representation with a strange mixture of pride and resentment. There he was between the Dog-Faced Boy and the Mermaid, but he was no longer the Kilkenny Giant—he was Bozo, the only living tattooed skeleton from Brazil!

Ellen could scarcely rest her eyes upon the picture. The tights had been bad enough, but now there was nothing on him at all save a small bit of cloth about his loins, and the highly colored tattooing sprawling all over him.

"It's too bad!" she said. "Suppose, now,

he should want to cut off my legs for life! I wouldn't do it for twice the fifteen dollars. You should have stood out against him."

"A man must live," answered the giant gloomily. "Besides, he has a quick way about him, Mr. Barnum. Before you know it, there you are with the papers signed and all!"

They went around the corner to a little door at the back. There was a man there in a box. The giant strode past him grandly, with an air of authority, saying that he was taking his friends to see Mr. Barnum.

They went up two long flights of stairs and along a dark circular passageway, Ellen clutching Brian tightly by the hand. She tried to keep up with the long stride of the Kilkenny Giant, whose air of confidence seemed to desert him a bit as he knocked rather timidly upon a door, on which the name "P. T. Barnum" was emblazoned in letters at least a foot tall.

"Come in!" boomed a big voice.

A Woman for Dinner — *Walter Hazlitt*

There were two men in the office—one amazingly tall and broad, and the other amazingly short. The big man was seated at a large flat desk; the small one sat upon it, his legs crossed under him. They were Mr. Barnum and Major Tom Thumb, having a business conference.

"Oh!" shouted Brian delightedly. "Like Pips! Look! Like Pips!" He ran over to the desk. "Turn a flip-flap," he demanded.

The little man was very dignified. He climbed down from the desk by the aid of a chair, and stood looking up gravely at Brian—for the child was taller than he—with an odd look of offended dignity upon his chubby face.

"I don't turn flip-flaps, boy," he said in a high, childish voice; "but you may shake hands with me if you like."

Brian was abashed. He took the proffered hand timidly. The little man seemed very old to him.

Mr. Barnum laughed heartily.

"This is Major Tom Thumb," he said. "He's giving you for nothing what you'd have to pay fifty cents for out front." He turned and looked an inquiry at the Kilkenny Giant. "Well, Bozo?"

"It's the girl for the half lady," said Bozo, as we must now call him.

He thrust Ellen forward. She had been lingering, abashed, by the door.

"Ah! H-m!" Barnum looked keenly at Ellen. His bright brown eyes were piercing but kindly. "So you want to be the half lady, do you?"

"I'm needing the money, sir."

Ellen lifted her gray eyes to his face, her own cheeks suffused with a rosy blush. She looked very lovely.

"H-m! A real Irish rose!" exclaimed Barnum, beginning at once to make up a handbill in his mind. "Take off your shawl, my girl."

Ellen removed the small shawl from her head. Her hair was as black as a raven's wing, and had a hint of a wave in it. Lit-

tle tendrils of curls were on her forehead and at the nape of her neck.

"You haven't stretched it!" cried Barnum to Bozo. "Beautiful, with the proper clothes! A real Irish rose! Eyelashes half an inch long! From the aristocracy of old Ireland! Kings! Brian Og!" he exclaimed incoherently, keeping his eyes upon Ellen, while he reached for the writing pad he had always at hand. "Bozo, my boy, it's a deal! When can you come?" he asked Ellen.

"Any time, sir. There's nothing to prevent me."

"I must have a few days for publicity. Suppose we say Friday afternoon—that all right?"

"Yes, sir, and thank you kindly. Will I have the fifteen dollars by the week, or how?"

"Every week, as sure as Friday comes around. That'll do, Bozo. You've done me a favor I sha'n't forget."

Barnum nodded to them in dismissal, and

fell upon the pad and pencil to frame up his advertisement of the Irish rose. They went out of the office without further words, Brian dragged by the hand and staring wide-eyed at Major Tom Thumb, who stared solemnly back at him.

There was a band playing out front as Bozo bade them good-by at the stage door. Soon he would have to be stripped and on view with the rest of the freaks. Ellen assured him that she knew her way back, every step of it; but before she went home there was something to do. She would go to the school for little ladies and gentlemen, and arrange about Brian.

It was quite a long walk from the museum to Bank Street, and Ellen's courage and confidence began to desert her as she hurried along. She was very shabby, she knew that, and Brian's homespun smock, though neat and clean, was far from being in the style of dress worn by the more fortunate children of this new world.

They looked like immigrants, she thought.

They *were* immigrants, for the matter of that!

She tried to brace her falling courage by the thought of the good blood that flowed in their veins, but it was a very frightened little woman who paused in front of the little red house, with a flutter in her throat and a sinking feeling about her heart. The sign at the door, which had been so reassuring to her before, now seemed a warning put there to bid her keep out. "Little ladies and gentlemen!" Would the schoolmistress be able to recognize Brian as a little gentleman, in spite of appearances?

Ellen bent to the child, fluffed out the curls from under his cap, and smoothed his dress with her hands. With the corner of her shawl she furtively wiped the tips of his dusty boots. Then, summoning all her courage, she gave a very gentle pull to the brass knob by the side of the door.

The door was opened presently by a neat maid in a cap and apron—a tight-looking little maid, with a pursed up mouth and a

thin nose with a supercilious tilt to it.

"Could I see Miss Van Studdiford?" asked Ellen, her voice trembling.

"What do you want?"

The little maid's nose seemed to assume a higher tilt, in disdain of them; but Ellen looked the girl in the eye, and spoke with authority.

"I wish to speak with her."

"Well, I don't know. I'll see. You may come in."

The maid preceded them along the hall, and showed them into a prim parlor, where she bade them wait. Then she went upstairs, looking very doubtful and a bit puzzled at her own weakness in having admitted two such shabby visitors.

There was gilt-flowered paper upon the walls of the room, and several family portraits of painfully aristocratic aspect. An enormous walnut what-not filled one corner, and on its shelves was a collection of bric-a-brac, placed in exact rows. On the marble-topped center table there was a

stuffed bird under a glass case, with some gilt-embossed albums laid precisely around it. Two tail pier glasses in gilt frames at each end of the room accentuated its size. It looked very grand and imposing to Ellen. She grew more and more apprehensive of the success of her errand as she waited.

Miss Van Studdiford was the last of a very old family, which had long prided itself upon its gentility, in spite of straitened means. By the time it came to her, the gentility and the straitened means had increased to such an extent that something genteel had to be done about it. Teaching children to be little ladies and gentlemen in the best Van Studdiford manner had seemed the obvious thing to do.

When the thin, angular schoolmistress at length came into the parlor, Ellen was almost overpowered by her appearance and manner. She advanced slowly, with her carefully practiced mincing step, which swayed her crinoline to just the proper degree. She carried a white handkerchief in

her hands, which were crossed primly upon her middle. A large cameo brooch pinned the white lawn collar at her throat, and there was a little cap of rare old lace upon her head.

Ellen rose involuntarily and curtsied. Miss Van Studdiford inclined her head graciously, and seated herself gingerly upon the edge of a horsehair sofa.

"And what can I do for you?" she asked, her lips forming the words primly.

"It's the boy," said Ellen. "I'm wishing to have him educated."

She drew Brian from behind her chair. He was not a bashful child, as a rule, but something about the room and the appearance of the strange lady had quite taken him aback.

"He's a very beautiful little boy," said Miss Van Studdiford, with unaccustomed impulsiveness, and then she pulled herself up. "But, of course, handsome is as handsome does, you know."

She smiled, and, strangely, Brian felt

drawn to her. He went over to the sofa and put out his hand to be shaken.

Miss Van Studdiford took the hand graciously, patted it a bit, and drew Brian to her side. He was a very appealing little lad. Most women wanted to cuddle him. There was a wide-eyed wistfulness in his look which seemed to call for care and affection. The schoolmistress was surprised by the strange emotion of motherliness he aroused in her tight little breast.

"Do I know you?" she asked, looking at Ellen.

"Know me? Not till now," replied Ellen, bewildered by the question.

"Your family, I mean."

"I haven't any family, now—only a brother in Dublin. I lost my husband a while back. 'Twas he that wanted Brain to be a scholar and a gentleman, and that is why I am bringing him to you."

Miss Van Studdiford coughed delicately and affectedly, and put her handkerchief to her lips.

"I fear you do not understand," she said. "I wish to cast no reflections, but I require social standing in my pupils. You see, I am responsible for the associations of my little charges."

"You mean you wont take Brian?"

Ellen's heart sank and tears of disappointment rose to her eyes. Again Miss Van Studdiford uttered her embarrassed little cough.

"If you could bring me letters," she said, wondering at herself for making the suggestion.

"I haven't any letters," said Ellen, and then, desperately: "But I could bring you as much as twelve dollars, and maybe more, each week."

Miss Van Studdiford looked her surprise. Tweleve dollars! That was an important sum to her! But she had her fixed standards, which could not be easily lowered.

"My charge is only eight dollars per week for boarding pupils, and four for day

scholars, but they must be recommended by some one I know."

The collapse of her hopes was overwhelming to Ellen. The tears from her brimming eyes overflowed as she looked blankly at the schoolmistress.

Miss Van Stoddiford was very uncomfortable. She found it distressing to have any one display such frank emotion in her prim parlor, where all emotion was firmly suppressed. The child was leaning against her, his hand at her cameo brooch, twisting it about to get a better look at it. Those small fingers at her throat gave her an odd feeling. They seemed to be clutching at her heart.

"I'm sorry," she said. "I don't mean to be unkind. You see, my rules—I have only the best families. I am pledged to my clients."

Ellen valiantly rose to the defense of her family.

"His father was a schoolmaster in Ballymoney, and as fine a gentleman as you

could find. I haven't the education myself, but my own family could hold up its head with the best of them. However, it is not for me to force the child where he is not wanted."

Not wanted! It was difficult for Miss Van Studdiford to keep from drawing Brian within her arms and holding him there. He was leaning against her confidingly. Most of her pupils kept at a respectful distance from her. None of them loved her. She had never wanted any of them to love her. She was astounded and embarrassed by the desire she felt to keep this little one with her.

Ellen rose, went over to the sofa, and took Brian by the hand, to lead him away. He was reluctant to go. He pressed, warm and confiding, against Miss Van Studdiford's arm, seemingly fascinated by the cameo brooch at her withered throat.

"Look, Mother Machree!" he said. "It has a face on it, but no pretty red stones like yours."

"Come, Brian, come," said Ellen. "Bid the lady good day."

"Good day, lady," said Brian obediently, and he put up his face to be kissed.

The touch of those soft lips upon her cheek was a more moving appeal than Miss Van Studdiford could withstand.

"One moment," she said, as Ellen went toward the door. "It's most irregular, but perhaps, if you'd leave the child here, entirely in my care, I might reconsider."

"Give him up to you? Not to have the boy with at night?"

"It would be the only arrangement that I could consider."

Suddenly it came to Ellen that this was the thing to be done. Of course! She would have to be away at night, being shown off as the half lady. She couldn't have Brian with her at the museum.

"Do you mean you would take him, then, did I give him up to live with you?"

"I think—yes," replied Miss Van Stud-

diford, who felt as if she were speaking in a strange hypnotic dream.

"And I could have him back when I wish?"

"Naturally."

"And you'd feed him and board him for the twelve dollars, and I could come and see him now and again?"

"You may come any time after sessions; but my charge is only eight dollars. I make no distinctions."

Brian looked, bewildered, from one face to the other. He didn't understand the situation entirely. Something momentous was being decided about him—he felt that; but his mother's face looked brighter than it had for days, and there was kindness in the other prim face, too, so he felt that everything was all right, somehow.

"I'll bring him to-morrow, and thank you kindly," said Ellen. "I suppose you'll want the money in advance?"

"It is usual, of course," replied Miss Van Studdiford.

Ellen was so full of gratitude and relief at the turn of events that she was scarcely conscious how she got out of the house, and was doubtful whether she had said a proper good-by to the schoolmistress.

As they went up the street, Miss Van Studdiford peeped after them through the lace curtains. She was astounded by her own impulsiveness. What had come over her, she wondered? What would people think if they knew? That woman in the patched skirt, with the shawl over her head, and the little boy with his golden head and wistful eyes! What had they done to her? What was it about them that had made her ignore the fixed rules of her ordered existence?

She shook her head in doubt and dismay. She felt that she had been foolishly impulsive.

CHAPTER VII

ON the following Friday, when the wardrobe woman at Barnum's Museum was fitting Ellen into a spangled waist cut low at the neck, showing more of her shoulders than she liked, she had to think very hard of Brian, safe under Miss Van Studdiford's care, to force herself to go through with it.

"A scholar and a gentleman he'll be!" she said to herself, shutting her eyes tight to think it better. "A scholar and a gentleman, like his father wished! And me a half lady to be shown off for it! Well, it's done now and can't be helped, with my picture out at the front and all!"

She had seen her picture by the door of the museum that day, looking at it through the thick veil which Mr. Barnum had told her to wear day and night. It had looked strange to her, that picture, with great star-

A Western Fox Production. *Warner Machree*

THE KILKENNY GIANT OFFERS HIS AID

ing eyes and preposterous lashes which stuck up like bristles on a pig's back. She was represented as sitting upon a little swing, with no body to her at all below the waist! The Irish Rose, she was called, and under the picture she had read an account of her illustrious ancestry!

"A descendant of kings," it said. Well, it might be no lie at that. Her mother had often hinted at the like; but then, so had almost every other mother in Ballymoney. It was a common thing there to be descended from kings.

The wardrobe woman wanted to put paint upon her lips and cheeks, but this Ellen firmly refused. She had made no agreement to be painted like a harlot. Besides, she was wary of anything being put upon her, after what had happened to the Kilkenny Giant.

The first day was very hard. There was small need of color upon her cheeks when the crowd began to come and stare at her. Some of them rubbed their noses against

the glass case and stood there for five minutes at a time, staring intently to see if she winked, or was only a wax figure.

A hoarse voice cautioned her from behind the curtain from time to time:

"Smile! Smile! Nod your head!"

This she did painfully, almost ready to burst into tears, but held back from that by the thought of Brian so safe at the school for little ladies and gentlemen.

The next day was not so bad, and as the weeks wore on she became reconciled to her position, but never easy in it. The bare shoulders and the spangled waist, under the eyes of the staring crowd, were hard to put up with.

The nights were bad, too, in the little room near the museum where she lodged. It was hard not having the boy to cuddle and talk with; but there was the blessed hour between five and six when she would hasten to the school and have Brian all to herself in the garden behind the red house.

Her heart swelled wth pride when she thought of him in the new suit of kilts she had bought for him, and of the fine bow he had been taught, which he was always ready to show off to her. He was a great favorite at the school, and Miss Van Studdiford was making a pet of him. He liked her fine, he told his mother. Sometimes she gave him a jam tart up in her room, from her own table.

Brian, in fact, had quite taken the little old maid's heart by storm. She found herself wishing that he were her own. Sometimes she felt quite jealous, looking down from the back window and seeing him in the garden with his mother.

Ellen was a bit jealous, too—the child was so contented at the school; but that was only natural, having so much kindness and ease about him, and little ladies and gentlemen to play with. She rebuked herself severely when sometimes the thought came to her that she wished he missed her more than he did; but he loved her still. There

was no mistaking the joy with which he greeted her.

Ellen was undergoing a disagreeable experience at this time, aside from her unrelished prominence as the half lady. She was beautiful, and there were some men who knew, only too well, that she was no half woman.

Young bloods came to the museum and stood in front of her case for a long time, trying to catch and hold her gaze through the glass. One or the other of them would be at the stage door, at times, and would follow her to her lodgings. She wondered how they knew it was she under the concealing veil. She didn't know that they had paid the doorkeeper for this information. She had been accosted several times, and one of the men had laid his hand upon her arm and tried to detain her upon the street.

There was a man in the museum company, too—a rich man, who had put money into Barnum's venture. He pestered her

with attentions whenever he had the chance. She felt inclined to complain to Mr. Barnum. He wouldn't have it if he knew, but she was reluctant to bother him about the matter.

She told something of all this to Bozo, who thereafter accompanied her to her lodgings each night. He was a comfortable friend, Bozo. He never annoyed her in any way—never thought of her much, she surmised, being so bound up in his own depression and his own pride.

Marked for life, and yet a success! He didn't know how to look at the matter, but he considered his situation inwardly most of the time. He was homesick for Ireland, but would never go back, to have every one give him the laugh for the snakes and things upon him!

Barnum was continually changing his attractions, and Ellen trembled when she thought of the day when public interest in the half lady should cease. She had been there for three months. Her glass case was

still well surrounded, but there were other and newer attractions, and she noticed that there was not so much jostling and shoving to see her, as there had been at first. She hoped that no one else had noticed that.

One afternoon the museum was more than usually crowded. There was a new attraction—the Siamese Twins. It seemed to Ellen that the whole city had turned out to see them. The crowd churned and writhed in the Hall of the Freaks.

Major Tom Thumb and his bride, and Commodore Nutt and Minnie Warren, like four little dolls that had been cast aside, were looking peevish and neglected upon their platform. They hadn't sold a single photograph. They kept their exaggerated dignity, however. There was a crowd of school children in Mineral Hall. One could hear their high voices. When they came into the Hall of Freaks, the dwarfs would have their innings.

The Fat Lady and Bozo, shown upon the

same platform for reasons of contrast, were frankly bored. Only a few stragglers, who could not get near the Siamese Twins, had paused for a glance at them.

In front of Ellen's case there was a family group, evidently from the country. They looked at her with round eyes, wondering audibly how she existed with so many necessary organs lacking, as there must be.

"The pity of it!" the mother of the family exclaimed. "And such a beautiful girl, at that!"

Ellen was inured to comments like these. Her thoughts, as usual, were with Brian. Just an hour more of this, and she would be free to see her son again! She fell into a pleasant reverie, quite detached from her surroundings.

The door from Mineral Hall was directly opposite the case in which she sat, and presently, as in a horrifying dream, she saw Miss Van Studdiford come through it, stepping daintily, like an old hen, with a flock

of particularly well behaved chicks behind her.

The schoolmistress looked as if she were doing something of which her gentility did not quite approve. All the best schools had declared a half holiday for the purpose of visiting Barnum's Museum, where there were many instructive things for their pupils to see and hear. Miss Van Studdiford wished to give her charges every opportunity enjoyed by those of other schools, but she could not bring herself to approve of the museum. It seemed vulgar and theatric to her.

Ellen had had no warning of the intended visit. She had told Miss Van Studdiford nothing of the nature of her occupation. She had felt, in fact, that the little lady would strongly disapprove of it. It came to her, in a flash of dismay, that there was a very disagreeable experience before her—and before the schoolmistress, too, for the matter of that.

She had no time to think. Miss Van

Studdiford came straight across the room, directly toward Ellen's case, and in a moment she and the children were standing in a tight little group before it.

Ellen's frightened eyes met Miss Van Studdiford's horrified gaze. Their faces grew white at the recognition. Then there was Brian in his little new kilts, pushing to the front. In a moment he lifted his eyes to his mother and saw her sitting there, seemingly cut in half, upon the little swing.

"Mother!" he cried. "Oh! Oh! Oh! Mother Machree!"

The child was so frightened that he looked as if he were going into a convulsion. His cry was a pitiful shriek.

Ellen stood up in the face of all the people, and ran through the curtain at the back and out to him. A strange figure she was in the old patched skirt with the spangled waist above it!

CHAPTER VIII

THERE was an amazed silence for a second, and then a shout of laughter went up. The crowd surged from the platform of the Siamese Twins, and people hurried in from the other rooms to see what it was all about. Ellen found herself the center of a shrieking, howling mob. Men and women hung on to each other, scarcely able to stand for laughing, and described the ridiculous incident to newcomers, amid shrieks and howls. Even the freaks were doubled with mirth upon their platforms.

An attendant dragged Ellen and Brian through the laughing mob, to a passageway behind the show cases, and up the stairs to Barnum's office. Ellen scarcely realized what she had done, being bewildered by the shouts and laughter and absorbed in her efforts to soothe Brian, whose grief and fear would not abate.

Mr. Barnum was very severe, at first, when he was told what had happened.

"Artists," he said, "should never let their private feelings interfere with their public duties. It's too bad, my girl. You've lost a good job by not being able to control yourself."

Ellen could find nothing to say in her defense.

Suddenly, as the humor of the situation came to him, Mr. Barnum began to laugh. He took up his writing pad, at once determining to get ahead of the public on the joke. He would tell them the whole thing was planned for their amusement. Fortunately it was the 1st of April. Fine! Leave it to him to turn the happening to his advantage!

He was a kind man. He gave Ellen two weeks' wages over what was due her, but he told her that it was all up with the job, for he would never dare to show a half lady again.

"That isn't the worst of it," thought

Ellen, as she went away from the museum with Brian. "What am I to say to Miss Van Studdiford?"

She went at once to the school.

Miss Van Studdiford was lying upon her bed, vinegar and brown paper upon her forehead, her face drawn with anguish. Her little world was toppling to its fall, she thought. Her patrons would take their children away when they heard that she had placed the child of a public mountebank among them.

She wouldn't see Ellen. She couldn't bear the thought of her, or of the boy, either, for the moment. She sent down word that Ellen was to take Brian away with her.

As Ellen turned sadly away with the boy, she felt that Miss Van Studdiford was right to be angry with her. She shouldn't have concealed what her occupation was. She had been wrong, and had spoiled Brian's chances forever!

After a few days, in which she sought em-

ployment vainly, Bozo came to her again, like a protecting Providence. He brought good news. Mr. Barnum had not forgotten the Irish Rose. He had recommended her to a very fine lady, as nurse for her children. He had vouched for Ellen, gliby framing up a story in which there was no hint of her adventure as the half lady.

"It's a rare chance to live in a fine house, with plenty of the best to eat, and twelve dollars a month besides," said Bozo. "Will ye take it?"

"Would I? And why not? It's a gift from Heaven!"

"Well"—Bozo looked a bit uncomfortable—"there's more to it. You'd have to be puttin' the boy somewheres. They'd not take you with the boy—maybe not, if they knew you had one at all."

Put Brian somewhere! Ellen had heard no more than this.

"There's charity schools," said Bozo, looking away from her.

"Charity schools! Michael's son in a charity school! Never!"

"Mr. Barnum was tellin' me they had good care and all," said Bozo, answering the proud flush which rose to her face.

"Never! Never! We'll starve together first, me and the lad!"

She drew Brian to her side and held him closely.

"I thought maybe you'd be lookin' at it that way," said Bozo. "It wouldn't be any harm to see the lady, anyways. Here's her name and the place she lives, written by Mr. Barnum himself, and she's expectin' you."

He handed her a slip from Barnum's famous writing pad, scrawled all over in his big hand.

"What's the good of going at all, if I must give Brian up?"

"I'll not be given up," said Brian. "I'll stay with you, Mother Machree!"

At that moment there came a timid knock at the door. Seeing Ellen too much dis-

tressed to answer it, Bozo strode over to the door and opened it. He was greeted by a little shriek of dismay.

Miss Van Studdiford stood in the doorway, looking up at him, frightened by his size. She grasped her crinoline in her hands and started back, as if to run down the stairs again; but Brian had seen her.

"Miss Van! Miss Van!" he shouted.

This was the name he had given her from the first, not being able to manage the full patronymic. He ran out into the hall and greeted her enthusiastically, pulling her into the room. She squeezed herself against the doorway as she came in, looking very much afraid of Bozo, who, with rare tact, went out at once, closing the door after him.

"Have you a jam tart? Did you bring me a jam tart?" asked Brian.

"No, deary. No, but I will. There will be jam tarts!" Miss Van Studdiford murmured incoherently, looking at Ellen, who

had risen and was staring at her, expecting she knew not what discomfort from this surprising visit.

The little schoolmistress had come to reproach her, of course, she thought. She had brought shame upon the school. Ellen trembled a bit as she curtsied and wiped a chair with her apron for the little lady to sit upon.

Miss Van Studdiford seemed strangely choked with emotion. Brian's greeting her with such joy meant very much in her loveless existence. He clung to her hand and leaned against her. No child had ever done that before.

"I'm sorry," stammered Ellen. "I'm sorry things happened as they did. I wouldn't have brought shame upon you, with your being so good to my little boy and all."

"But you didn't," said Miss Van Studdiford. "No one knows. It was most fortunate."

She explained that the story of the April

A William Fox Production. *Mother Machree.*

MISS VAN STUDDIFORD ADOPTS BRIAN.

fool hoax that Mr. Barnum had spread about the city had made no mention of her school. It was fortunate, too, that her little pupils had been so bewildered by the uproar that they had not clearly realized what had happened. She had hurried them away, and there had been no harm done at all. No one knew!

"Then I am happier than I've been for days," said Ellen. "With my own worries, I was holding yours, too. I feared it might have brought harm to the school. How ever did you find us here?"

Miss Van Studdiford spoke in a hushed voice:

"I went there. I went to the museum myself. A man at the door told me where I might find you. I would never have done such a thing, but I kept thinking—" She passed her mittened hand caressingly over Brian's bright head. "Such a bright mind, such a little gentleman! It seemed a pity. As the twig is bent, so will the tree incline, you know."

"You are going to take him back again?" cried Ellen hopefully.

"It might be arranged."

Miss Van Studdiford pursed up her mouth and tried to look very businesslike.

"I have just had a position offered me," said Ellen, "though not enough, perhaps, to pay you. It's but twelve dollars by the month, but I'll have my board, and I can give you all of it—and more, perhaps, if I can find sewing to do at nights."

"What sort of a position is it?" asked Miss Van Studdiford, looking more or less apprehensive.

"It's to take care of a lady's children."

Miss Van Studdiford flushed. She wasn't quite sure whether this was going up or down in the social scale. From a half lady in a museum to a nurse girl! A servant's child among her aristocratic charges! It had to be thought about! But she wanted Brian more than anything she had ever wanted in her life.

"I won't be a hired girl long," said Ellen.

"I'll work out of it—you'll see! Soon I'll be able to pay you more."

"It isn't the remuneration," said Miss Van Studdiford; "but—oh, dear me, it's very difficult!"

"Am I going back to play with Ariana DePeyster and Bobby Roosevelt?" cried Brian eagerly. "Mother Machree, am I going back to school? I want to go!"

"You want to leave me, Brian?" Ellen asked sadly.

"But you'll come every day to play in the garden! It's pretty there—not like this place!"

How cruel children can be with their truthfulness and self-seeking!

"Would you take him again?" asked Ellen.

Miss Van Studdiford looked uncomfortable. There was something she wanted to propose, but the words would not come easily.

"Is it my being a hired girl would prevent it?"

"If my clients should know, it would be awkward. I thought perhaps—would you let me adopt him?"

She spoke in a small voice, frightened by her own suggestion.

"No! No!" cried Ellen. "Give him up to you? Never! Never!"

"I know. I—of course not!" Miss Van Studdiford rose, trembling a little. "I was only thinking—the child's interests—"

She moved toward the door.

"Wait!" Ellen's voice was muffled. She scarcely knew what she said. "Give me a day to think. Something may happen. I'll see you to-morrow."

"Very well. Of course you wouldn't. I didn't think you would. I'm sorry; but, you see, it would be the only way in which I could consider taking him."

"I'll come to see you to-morrow," said Ellen dully.

"We'll come to see you to-morrow, Miss Van—to-morrow!" shouted Brian joyfully.

He ran to her where she stood by the

door, and lifted his lips to be kissed.

As Miss Van Studdiford leaned toward him, she had an impulse to clasp him in her arms and bear him away in spite of everything; but she went out silently, walking with her little mincing step, hiding all emotion carefully, and pulling down her veil, so that no one in the street should recognize her, coming from that poor place.

CHAPTER IX

ELLEN slept not at all that night. She sat by the bed, watching the candle-light flicker over her son's face as he lay peacefully sleeping. She was trying to see her way, her duty. Piece by piece, she was trying to tear every shred of self from her bosom.

She couldn't think it was best to give Brian up entirely. What love and care would make up to him for the lack of a mother's guiding hand? But then, what an advantage to him to be there with Miss Van Studdiford, learning to be a scholar and a gentleman, as his father had wished!

She fell asleep in the gray morning on her knees, her cheek upon the worn coverlet, with Brian's hand beneath it.

Early that day a note came from Miss Van Studdiford, brought by a boy, who said he had been told to wait for an answer. He

stood by the door, whistling through his teeth and staring speculatingly at Brian, who stared back at him.

The note said:

I will take Brian if you will agree not to see him here during your proposed occupation. I am sure you will understand my motive in making this stipulation. We can arrange for you to see him outside of the school. If agreeable to you, Brian may be sent by the messenger, who is the neighborhood "boots," and thoroughly reliable. He has the fare of the stage, should you decide to send Brian with him.

This was a reprieve, for there was no word of adoption. Ellen felt a glow of gratitude for Miss Van Studdiford. How good she was! How fond of the boy!

Having Brian well taken care of would give his mother a chance to look about. Soon she would find an occupation which would be more pleasing to the schoolmis-

tress. It would be no time at all, she thought, when she could make a home of her own, and have Brian back again.

She walked to the Broadway stage with them, Brian's hand clasped in hers, and the boy whistling behind them. Brian skipped along, delighted to be going back to school.

Ellen watched the lumbering stage as it bore him away. She watched until it was out of sight.

"It is only for a time," she kept assuring herself.

Nevertheless, her heart was heavy as she turned back and went in the direction of Washington Square, where the lady lived to whom Mr. Barnum had recommended her.

The house she sought was a very large one, square and high and rich-looking. There was a garden at its side, which, she could see through the grilled gate, ran a long way to the back.

She pulled the shining brass knob at the gate, and heard the faint tinkle of a bell

somewhere in the house. A negro came up the brick walk and opened the gate. Ellen timidly told him her errand. She had never quite recovered from her fear of black people, having never seen one before landing in America.

This one seemed very pleasant, however. He grinned at her reassuringly, and led her through the garden to the back door, and through the kitchen, where there were more black people, to the servants' dining room, where he bade her wait while he informd Mrs. Cutting of her coming.

It was quite half an hour before a white woman, in a frilled cap and apron, with snappy black eyes and a strange accent to her speech, came and led Ellen upstairs to Mrs. Cutting's boudoir, where that lady was at breakfast.

Seeing her in a pink *peignoir* with a lacy cap and ribbons, seated in a huge puffed chair, with a shining silver service before her, Ellen was much impressed. Mrs. Cut-

ting looked like a queen, she thought.

"How do you do?" said the lady, pleasantly enough, but a trifle haughtily.

Ellen was too much abashed to speak. She bobbed a little curtsy. Mrs. Cutting did not ask her to sit down.

"This Mr. Barnum told my husband that you are from Ireland, of a good family?" she said.

There was a faint note of interrogation and disappointment in her voice. Ellen looked very shabby.

"Yes, ma'am," she replied meekly.

"I hope you haven't a brogue. I can't let the children acquire a brogue."

"Not when I am careful," said Ellen, speaking very primly.

"Well, be careful all of the time, then. I understand that you are the widow of a professor or something, and that you haven't been employed in domestic service before?"

Ellen inclined her head, still too much abashed to speak.

Mrs. Cutting looked at her for a moment in silence, a trifle petulantly.

"Oh, dear! It's most annoying, this changing! Nurse is going to be married. I'm sure she had a comfortable home here. Well! Well! We'll try you for a fortnight. Simone! Simone!" she called, to the Frenchwoman, who had gone into the bedroom, and who came to the door at her summons. "Show this woman up to the nursery, and tell nurse to instruct her in her duties. Tell Joe I shall want the landau at eleven o'clock."

Ellen followed the Frenchwoman out of the room, feeling that she had impressed Mrs. Cutting very unfavorably. It was true, she had. Mrs. Cutting was annoyed with the whole thing. Her husband had such queer acquaintances—this Mr. Barnum, for instance! Why insist upon her taking a nurse upon his recommendation, simply because he had told her husband a tale of undeserved misfortune? The woman wasn't going to do at all, but she would

have to give her a trial. Mr. Cutting's word was law in that house.

The fortnight had not passed, however, before Mrs. Cutting found that she had made a mistake in her first judgment of Ellen. The woman was a treasure—so quiet, so capable, so refined. The children took to her at once. Before a month had passed they adored her.

Ellen didn't measure her duties. She was willing to help in any household emergency. It seemed that she was always substituting on some maid's day out. Silently and unobtrusively she grew day by day in the estimation of the whole family. Mr. Cutting rather plumed himself upon having found such a treasure. Even Mrs. Cutting sometimes dropped the formal "nurse," and called her by her name.

That lady had occasional spells of bad headaches. Before long it was Ellen for whom she called, to soothe her brow, and to sit beside the bed and fan her until she fell asleep.

Every fortnight Ellen had a day out, and Miss Van Studdiford would bring Brian to a little unfrequented park in Greenwich Village. Here they would have two precious hours together, while the schoolmistress sat on a bench at a little distance and watched them jealously.

"Why don't you come to our house, Mother Machree?" Brian often asked. "There's a swing in the garden. You could swing me."

"But it's fine here, Brian. Isn't any place good when we are together?"

"Yes," Brian would reply, a bit doubtfully; "but I like it better in our garden."

Then, seeing a shadow upon his mother's face, he would put his arms about her neck and kiss her again and again, as if in apology for having hurt her.

Watching from her bench, Miss Van Studdiford would feel a pang when she saw this. Brian was fond of her, but not in that way! Not enough!

A year passed by, and slowly the convic-

tion forced itself upon Ellen that what the harpist had said—so long ago, it seemed—was only too true. Once a servant always a servant!

She saw no way of bettering her position. Every hour of the day was taken up by her numerous duties. At night she sewed for Brian. Everything he wore was fashioned by her skillful fingers. Every penny of her wages went to his keep. Mrs. Cutting supplied her nurse's uniform, and she needed nothing else for herself.

Her secret meetings with Brian, and Miss Van Studdiford's constant apprehension that they would be seen together, began to force a feeling of inferiority upon her. She was a detriment to her own child. He would be ashamed of her when he grew up, she began to think. She would be a millstone about his neck. A servant's child!

Something must be done about it.

One Sunday as she was taking her little charges to Sunday school, she encountered Miss Van Studdiford upon the same er-

rand, with her boarding pupils in a sedate line behind her. Brian was walking with the schoolmistress, who held him proudly by the hand. When he saw his mother, he uttered a glad cry of greeting, and tried to pull away from Miss Van Studdiford.

The children stared, and the schoolmistress hastened her steps, almost dragging Brian along. Ellen could hear his wailing cry of rebellion as they turned the corner.

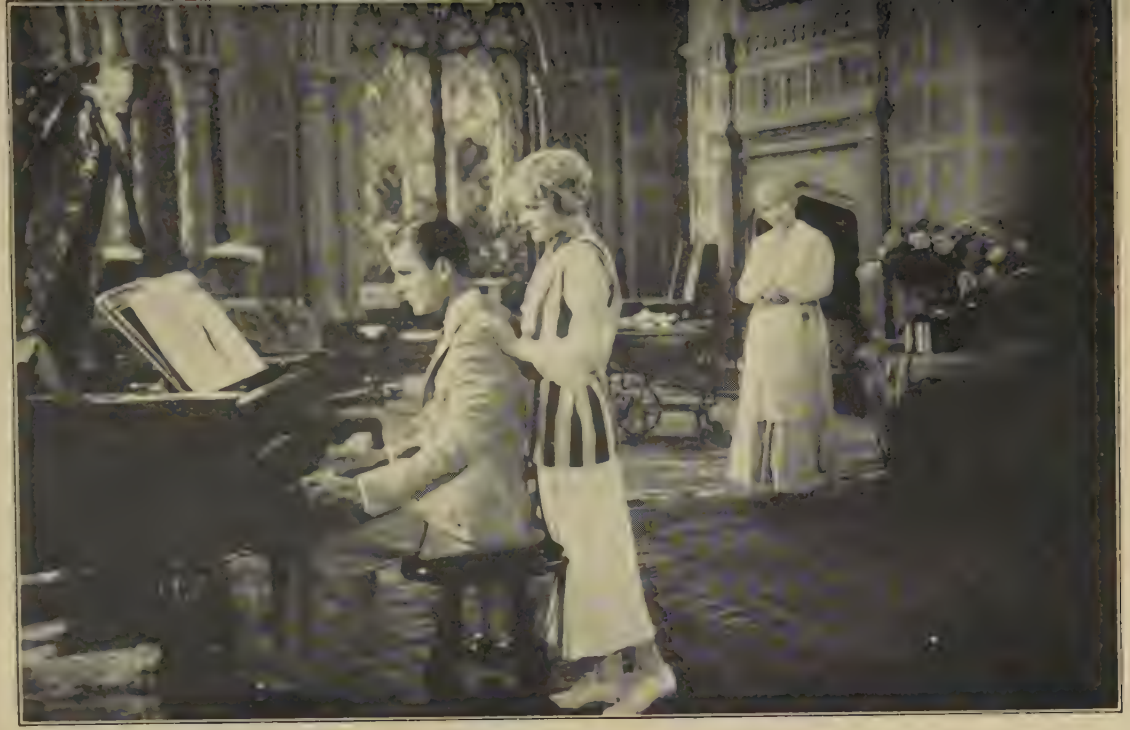
The Cutting children had been curious about the incident. They had wanted to know who was the little boy who had called "Mother Machree" after her.

Ellen hated to lie. She would have liked to tell them proudly that the boy was her son; but she remembered her promise to Miss Van Studdiford, and put them off with some vague murmur about the child mistaking her for some one else.

The following day she received a note from the schoolmistress—one of a series which had been hinting that the present state of things could not continue. For

Brian's sake, they must make some permanent arrangement. Miss Van Studdiford's former notes had hinted delicately and obliquely at the subject of adoption; but in this one she came out with it flatly. She didn't mean to be cruel. She had come to regard Brian as her own, and to fear for his future.

Ellen could not bring herself to answer the note at once. If she refused the demand —for it was a demand now, no longer a veiled suggestion—she saw the consequences with painful distinctness. She would be back where she had started—she and Brian in some miserable room, face to face with the heartbreaking struggle for existence; and Brian's chances would be lost forever!

The thought came to her to confide in Mrs. Cutting. She knew that her services were highly valued by her mistress, and perhaps she would be allowed to bring Brian there. He was a good child. She could have him in the room with her. They

A William Fox Production "THERE'S A PLACE IN MY MEM'RY — " *Mother Machree.*

would scarcely know he was in the house.

But her clear vision saw only too well the selfishness of this idea. She would be happy in having him with her, but how about Brian? A servant's child! Creeping about, silent and repressed, seeing more fortunate children pampered and groomed and taught, growing servile, perhaps, and boot-licking for odd pennies! No! No! It was not to be thought of!

She had no friend to whom she could go for advice or help. Bozo had left Barnum's Museum, and was traveling with a small circus in the West. He had written to her once, and there was a definite farewell between the lines of his letter. Bozo had tact. He recognized her as a gentlewoman with ambition to better herself in life, and he knew that his acquaintance was of no advantage to her.

She eagerly scanned the advertisements in the papers, and applied for several positions which seemed promising and of a more dignified character than her present

employment; but there were meager chances in business for a women in those days. There were none at all for Ellen, with her lack of training. Domestic service was the only thing she was fitted for. It was useless for her to try to rise above it!

So at length Ellen made the great surrender. Brian McHugh became Brian Van Studdiford, hard and fast, by law, and their meetings ceased, so that he might be weaned from the memory of her. Ellen stipulated, however, that no one but she was to pay for his education and upbringing. Miss Van Studdiford accepted this condition gratefully enough. Her school brought her a bare subsistence, and Ellen's help was necessary, if Brian was to have equal advantages with the other children.

It was not so easy to wean Brian from the memory of his mother. There were times when he cried for her, and would not be comforted; but as the months went on and the years, the memory of her began to

grow dim. After a while, without being told in so many words, he was given to understand that his mother had died, that she would never come back to him again.

CHAPTER X

ONE fine autumn day in the year 1863, a young man strode happily up Broadway, looking very fine indeed in a spick-and-span-new uniform. He was a lieutenant of the Tenth New York Regiment, which had not yet seen active service.

Incongruously, and in despite of regulations, he carried a small round bouquet covered with tissue. He carried it proudly. He was going to see his sweetheart, and didn't care much who knew it.

He was followed by sympathetic glances. It was evident that here was a young soldier in love, and a handsome, well-set-up young soldier, who might be sure of his welcome wherever he was going.

He spoke to many people along the way, being well known in the city and received among the best there. He was the adopted son of old Miss Van Studdiford—a distant

relation of hers, it was understood. His friends predicted that he would have a great future. Before the start of the war he had already made his mark as a lawyer. He was in Judge Deems's office, and it was said that when the present unpleasantness was over, he would be offered a partnership in that important law firm.

But the happiest circumstance in this young officer's life was that the opposition which the fashionable Cuttings had shown to his courtship of their daughter was gradually wearing away. The only objection they had had to him was his lack of fortune, and even they could see that this would be mended shortly. With Judge Deems to help him, he would go far.

Strangely, as the young man strode happily along, he was not thinking exclusively of his sweetheart. Part of his thoughts were with the little old woman who had stood at the door of their home on Bank Street, and had watched him so fondly and anxiously as he went up the street.

How good she had been to him always, he thought! Dear Aunt Van! What immense sacrifices she had made for him! How delightful it was that he was beginning to repay her!

He would pay her more and more as time went on, he thought proudly. She would have her carriage and pair with the best of them, before he was many years older! By George, he would begin to call her "mother" that very day, as she had always wanted him to do.

Mother! Something teased at the back of his mind. Why had he been so reluctant to give Aunt Van that name? She had been more than a mother to him. He remembered his own mother vaguely, like a beautiful dream. A beautiful, sorrowful dream! It was that dream, of course, which had kept him from calling Aunt Van "mother."

He was sorry that he had been so stubborn about it. He would try the new name upon her that night, he decided. He

grinned as he imagined the look which would come to the anxious old face when he spoke the word she had always wanted to hear.

There was a pleasant stir and excitement in the air. The Stars and Stripes were flying from every shop front and house. Bands played. There were the sounds of marching feet and rolling drums as companies in new blue uniforms were being drilled upon the streets and squares.

New York was in the war in earnest. Gone were the days when the "peace at any price" men had kept the city in a state of ferment and dissatisfaction; when powerful interests had used every means at their disposal to force the government into some compromise, *any* compromise, which would lead quickly to an adjustment of the differences between the North and South.

As the young officer skirted Washington Square, he looked with envy toward the barracks established there for the accommodation of troops passing through New

York from the North and East on their way to the front. He was impatient at being kept in the city upon police duty. He feared the war would end without his having been in it at all.

The Cutting family still lived in the old house on the north side of the square. They had not joined the hegira of the fashionable folk to the hideous "brownstone fronts" on Fifth Avenue, but were well content in the spacious red brick house with its large garden behind it, and its broad, lavender-tinted windows looking out upon the park.

The young man ran eagerly up the steps and pulled the bell vigorously. In a moment the door was opened by old Joe, the butler, who greeted him with a delighted grin.

"Yes, sir, cap'n," he said. "Miss Edith ain't only in—she's waitin'."

He chuckled and nodded his head toward the front drawing-room.

The young man didn't wait to be an-

nounced. He went across the broad hall to the drawing-room, where Edith was busy rolling fine linen into bandages. She had been peeping through the curtains, watching for him to come up the street. Seeing him, she had hastily run across the room and seated herself before a small table, upon which her work was spread. She was breathing a little quickly, but she tried to call up a look of welcoming surprise.

"Oh, is that you, Brian?" she said. "Is it really four o'clock?"

"It's ten at night from the way I feel," said Brian, coming toward her as she rose, and taking her two hands in his. "I thought the day would never end. I hoped you'd feel the same way, after last night."

Edith dimpled.

"I did, too," she confessed; "but I mustn't make you conceited!"

He kissed her upon the cheek. These little flying kisses were all he had had, as yet. Even last night, when she had confessed that she loved him, his lips had only

been able to touch the tip of her ear. Girls had to be wooed in those days. There was no meeting a man halfway, or perhaps three-quarters, as is the fashion now.

Brian presented his bouquet. It was of moss roses and forget-me-nots. They knew the language of flowers, these two, and Edith laid her lips upon the blossoms, blushing at the sentiment they expressed. He kissed her again, this time as near her lips as the little dimple at their corners. She ran away from him, laughing, and pulled the bell cord for a maid to bring a vase and water for the flowers.

Brian followed her, and was about to win another kiss, when they heard footsteps in the hall. Edith laughingly pushed him away, and he retired hastily to the window, where he stood looking out.

In a moment a woman appeared in the doorway—a little bent woman in a black gown and a plain white apron.

"Oh, Ellen!" cried Edith. "I didn't mean to trouble you."

"All the maids have gone with your mother to the Soldiers' Rest, so I—"

She paused. Brian had turned from the window, and it was as if something in his appearance had struck further words from her lips. She retreated toward the door.

"I only wanted a vase for the flowers," said Edith, showing the bouquet proudly. "Brian, this is Ellen, my old nurse." She put her arm affectionately about the little woman. "Ellen, this is my—this is Lieutenant Van Studdiford."

Ellen looked very white. Her hand trembled as she took the flowers from Edith, but she managed something between a bow and a curtsy toward Brian, who was staring at her with a strange, puzzled look in his eyes. He said nothing, not even a conventional greeting.

There was a moment's odd silence. Then Ellen turned and went from the room.

"Why, Brian," said Edith, "I don't think you were nice at all. That's Ellen. She's been with us all my life, and longer,

for she nursed Richard and Emma, too. We think of her as one of the family. I hope you're not a snob!"

"Why, no—what an idea! I was just—I thought I'd seen her some place before."

Edith pouted a bit.

"You might have shaken hands with her or said something!"

"I'm sorry," said Brian. "I will the next time. It's odd. She made me think of something that I couldn't quite get the meaning of."

Meanwhile Ellen, in the pantry, was leaning against one of the shelves, steadying herself, before she reached for a vase in which to put the flowers. She had felt that the meeting with her son must come some time, ever since Edith had confided in her, several months ago, about her love for Brian; but she had hoped somehow to avoid it.

How mad she had been, she thought, to stay on for a moment after Edith told her! There was danger to Brian's happiness in

her presence in that house. The startled, half recognizing look in the boy's eyes had frightened her. If he should see her again and again, as he must if he married Edith, might he not piece together scraps of childish memories and see the truth whole?

For his sake she knew she must go away. She must leave the only home she had known for more than twenty years. She didn't mind the sacrifice for herself, but what was she to say to the Cuttings? She was regarded there as a fixture, as the main prop of the household. How could she explain her sudden leaving?

Mrs. Cutting could never get on without her. She was home-keeper, administrator, confidante, backbone to every person in that house. She loved them all, but she couldn't stay there and run the risk of their finding out that Brian Van Studdiford was Brian McHugh, the son of the poor hired girl who had come to them many years ago in her patched gown and ragged shoes—a poor ignorant Irishwoman, at whom they

laughed lovingly at times, because of her saving ways and the slight brogue that still clung to her tongue. To have the truth known would be to pull down all the bright edifice she had builded about Brian so painfully and laboriously during the long years.

She put the flowers into a vase, and gave it to old Joe, to take back to the drawing-room. Then she went upstairs to her own little room upon the top floor, to think things out.

How handsome he had looked, her boy, in his new uniform! Handsomer even than when she had seen him last, standing in his cap and gown, to receive his diploma at the university. She had sat far back in the auditorium, a shabby, old-fashioned figure in the gay crowd. She had seen Miss Van Studdiford seated up in front, just behind the students, among their parents and friends. She had not cared about that, because she knew that it was not Miss Van Studdiford who had accomplished the mir-

acle of placing Brian among those children of fortune. Every bit of his way Ellen had paid—paid by saving and scrimping and being thought close by the open-handed Cuttings.

They had often chaffed her about it. Sometimes they called her "Mrs. Midas," and asked her what she was going to do with all the money she was hoarding? She had never had a new gown to her back these many years. She had performed miracles in the remaking of hand-me-downs from various members of the family. In her earlier years she had even made slippers from bits of carpet, to save her one pair of shoes, which she was obliged to wear when she went out into the park with the Cutting children.

She didn't wonder that they thought her stingy. How surprised they would be if they knew that she had saved nothing for her old age! Her wages had been raised from time to time, and frequently Mr. Cutting had invested small sums for her, much

to her advantage. Doubtless they thought she was very well fixed.

There was her brother Denny, too. Long since she had paid his loan, with interest. He thought her rich, and had recently written to ask a loan for one of his boys to go to college. She would have to refuse him. If it were not for the war, she might have managed it; but it would be months now before Brian would be earning again. She felt that it would not be fair to him to spare a penny to any one else.

It would be hard to leave the Cuttings, but she was well and strong. There was some place in which she could make her living. It must be in New York, however. She didn't want to relax her watchfulness over Brian.

There had never been a time in all the years when she had lost touch with him. Many a long afternoon she had lingered across the street from the little red brick house, hoping to get a glimpse of his face at a window, or perhaps to see him come

A William Fox Production. *Mother Machree*

OFF TO THE COLORS.

out with the other children for a sedate walk to Washington Square, where they were sometimes allowed to play.

She had fashioned his life after the pattern of that led by the little Cutting children. When they had velocipedes, Brian had one also. When the French *mademoiselle* came to them, Brian was sent to M. Thébaud, in Ninth Street. He had been in the same dancing class with them at Signor Bellini's; and so on, step my step, she had given him equal advantages with the children of the rich.

Miss Van Studdiford had always carefully carried out Ellen's wishes, expressed in veiled notes which came to her from time to time. Poor Miss Van Studdiford! She had not dared to disobey in the slightest particular, fearing that Ellen would appear in person, and make some claim upon Brian's affection and obedience.

She need not have feared that. Once having made the great surrender, Ellen stood firmly by her agreement.

Miss Van Studdiford's school had been long abandoned. It had gradually died out with the progress of the city, and for more than twelve years she and Brian had lived entirely upon Ellen's earnings. The schoolmistress felt uncomfortable when she thought of this, but she thought of it as little as possible. It was a thing to be ignored, since it served Brian. The young man, on his part, understood that Miss Van Studdiford had a small income, upon which they lived so meagerly.

Ellen pondered long and painfully. If Brian were coming into the family, she must leave it; but she decided to wait until the last moment, and to be very careful to keep out of his way.

CHAPTER XI

AS Brian went back home through the dim twilight, under the happiness at his heart and the heady thrill in his brain something kept stirring—something sad, something disquieting. Edith had been sweeter, more yielding, than ever before, but there was an ache somewhere.

Memories came of his childhood—very vague memories of a time when, it seemed, he had lived amid crowds and with strange people—giants and ogres and a little man who grimaced. There was also a memory of an apple tree in bloom, and soft arms about him, in a garden. It was Aunt Van's garden, of course, but the arms had been his mother's.

It was strange, he mused, how long a time it had been since he had given a thought to his mother; but then Aunt Van had always discouraged his thinking of her. That

wasn't right. A man should think of his mother at times, even if she were long dead.

Miss Van Studdiford was waiting at the parlor window. Brian smiled indulgently when he saw that the prim lace curtains were drawn slightly aside. She always seemed to be waiting there, watching for him. He had never given her any cause for anxiety, and yet she was always anxious, always troubled, he thought, by some fear of what might happen when he was away from her.

She met him in the hallway when he opened the door. Her strained old face looked a question.

"It's all right, Aunt Van," he said. "Look at me! I'm an engaged man—at least if Mr. Cutting consents when I see him to-morrow!"

A pang went through Miss Van Studdiford's heart. Engaged! Of course, she had known it must come some day. She tried to be happy about it for his sake, but to share his affection was very hard to her.

She knew only one way in which to love, and that was to hold tightly, not to give.

"You shouldn't have spoken to her, Brian, until you'd seen Mr. Cutting."

"Oh, Aunt Van! The world's moving. We don't do things that way any more."

"In my young days," began Miss Van Studdiford, in her primmest schoolmistress manner, "girls never allowed a man to guess at their sentiments until the parents had been consulted."

Brian laughed, and, putting his arm about her, looked down at her boyishly.

"Your young days couldn't have been very thrilling," he said, and then added bashfully: "Mother!"

Miss Van Studdiford started, and looked into his face. Then she leaned against him, trembling, as he led her back into the little parlor. How long she had wanted to hear that name upon his lips, and how guilty she felt now that he had uttered it!

"What made you call me that, Brian?"

she asked, as he seated himself upon the sofa by her side.

"Because you've been a mother to me, and I'm so happy to-night! Besides, I've been thinking a bit of my other mother."

Miss Van Studdiford stiffened and drew slightly away from him.

"Of what did she die, Aunt Van?" he asked, slipping unconsciously into the familiar form of address, "and when?"

Miss Van Studdiford flushed—a painful flush on those old, withered cheeks.

"Don't let us speak of it, Brian. Why bring up unhappy memories?"

"But I want to talk of it," persisted Brian. "It doesn't seem fair. We never speak of her. Maybe they know it when they're gone. Maybe it makes them lonely not to be spoken of."

He laughed a little self-consciously, to take off the edge of the mawkishness of what he was saying and feeling.

"I sort of feel that I'd like her to share

all my happiness, and—I suppose you think I'm talking like a girl?"

"No! No! It is an added grace to a strong man when he has sentiment."

Miss Van Studdiford never failed the opportunity of pointing out little niceties of conduct and thought.

"Where was my mother? Where did they put her when she died? Why do we never go to the place where she is buried?" Brian persisted.

"I don't know. I mean, it is very far away. I never thought it was good for children to nurse sad memories."

"But it isn't a sad memory to me. She seems a sort of nice dream, my mother. Besides, I'm not a child now, and I'd like to know. I'd like to go with Edith some day to that—that place. I think it's right I should.

Miss Van Studdiford's face became very strained and white. She hated to lie, for she thought it a deadly sin, but she saw no way out of it.

"It's not in this country at all—in Ireland." she murmured, scarce above a breath.

Brian looked puzzled.

"But she was here, Aunt Van! I remember she used to come to the garden. I remember it distinctly. It's odd, but I remember a brooch with red stones in it. She used to let me play with it. It's strange remembering a thing like that, and forgetting so much else! All the way home to-day I was thinking of her. I can almost remember how she looked. Her eyes were big! What relation was she to you, Aunt Van?"

"Very distant," said Miss Van Studdiford in a smothered tone. "A distant cousin."

How deep she was getting into the morass of untruth! How uncomfortable, how distressing it was! Weak tears came to her eyes.

"I want to know more about her, Aunt Van. You never told me anything. Why should you make a mystery of it?"

"I'm not. It is you who are making it a mystery. I can't talk about it. It is all too painful. I won't talk about it, Brian—I will not!"

She fell to sobbing. It was very painful to see an old woman cry.

"Then don't," said Brian, rising and patting her shoulder. "I didn't mean to distress you. We won't say any more about it, now."

Miss Van Studdiford took his hand and clung to it.

"You've never distressed me," she said. "You've always been good, Brian. I'm nervous and upset. It's this dreadful war! I keep fearing that you may be ordered away. I'm an old woman, and you are all I have!"

"Ordered away! Small chance of that, worse luck! Why, Aunt Van, the war 'll be over in a few months. I shall never see active service. I'm just a parlor soldier. If you had only let me enlist when I wanted to!"

Miss Van Studdiford shook her head. This was the one sore subject between them.

In a few moments he left her and went upstairs to his room, feeling very much dissatisfied and puzzled. Was there some stain upon his birth, he wondered, which made Aunt Van reluctant to discuss his mother with him? No! No! He wouldn't think that—not for a moment! Not of his sweet, beautiful mother, whose image began to grow stronger and more distinct to him.

Early the next afternoon, as soon as Brian was relieved from duty at the armory, he went down town to see Mr. Cutting at the banker's office. He felt very nervous about the coming interview. Mr. Cutting was a rich and influential man, and had a stern manner that made him difficult of approach.

Brian was asked to wait in the outer office, as the banker was engaged. He sat there for ten minutes or so. Then the door of the private office opened, and a

woman came out. It was Edith's old nurse.

Again Brian experienced the odd emotion that her appearance the day before had brought to him—a sort of puzzled groping for an elusive memory.

Ellen looked very much disturbed. Her face was flushed.

Brian welcomed the opportunity to make up for his boorishness of the day before.

"How do you do?" he said, standing before her with his cap in his left hand and a very pleasant smile upon his face.

He extended his other hand to her. Ellen forced herself to take it with seeming indifference.

"I'm very well, sir, I thank you," she said, trying to put calmness and respect into her tone.

Her voice sent a thrill through Brian—her touch, too. He couldn't understand it.

"Where have I met you before?" he asked, clinging to her hand, which she was trying to withdraw from his clasp. "Surely I've met you before?"

She shook her head dumbly, not looking at him.

Just then a secretary came to say that Mr. Cutting would see Lieutenant Van Studdiford, so he was obliged to leave Ellen there, with all sorts of unanswered questions between them.

When he went into the office, he found the banker looking very glum.

"Well, Van Studdiford," he said, "I'm in a devil of a stew! See that woman who just went out?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, she's been with us for twenty years—more than twenty years—and now she comes and gives me a month's notice. She hadn't the courage to tell my wife. I don't wonder! Of all ingratitude! Why, we've treated her like one of ourselves. I won't have it!" He thumped his fist upon the desk. "I told her so. She raised every one of my children. Gad, who's going to put the studs in my shirt and tie my tie?"

He looked indignantly at Brian, as if

expecting him to answer the question.

"Why is she leaving?" asked Brian.

"Hasn't any reason at all—not a blamed reason. Oh, women are the devil!"

Brian felt apprehensive. It was unfortunate that Mr. Cutting had been put into a temper just when, perhaps, he had come to make him more angry still.

Suddenly Cutting's eyes twinkled.

"Well," he said, "I guess you didn't come to hear my domestic troubles. Edith paved the way for you this morning. What makes you think you can support my daughter in the style to which she is accustomed?"

"I can't; but I can take care of her, and I have a future. Judge Deems is going to take me into partnership."

"Yes, I know. I stopped in to see him this morning. I guess it's all right with me, young man, if her mother consents. She's mighty keen on family, you know."

"Well, my aunt, Miss Van Studdiford—" began Brian.

"Yes, yes—fine old stock, but not much in the public eye at present. Mrs. Cutting is a bit of a snob, you know, though she denies it. She likes to march with the big procession!" He rose and put his hand upon Brian's shoulder. "I guess it will be all right. She likes you, and so do I, and my little girl—well, I don't think there's ever been any one else for her, and I want her to be happy. But there must be no talk of marriage until the war is over. I don't share the popular optimism about it, either. I think it's going to be a long, hard struggle."

He grasped Brian's hand and shook it. The lieutenant grinned boyishly, and could find no words. It was wonderful to have the matter settled so quickly and easily! He went out of the office scarcely feeling the ground beneath his feet.

In the hallway the young man stopped to mop his brow. Beads of perspiration stood upon it, as if he had been running. He was breathless, too, but oh, so happy, so triumphant!

CHAPTER XII

A FEW blocks from Mr. Cutting's office, on the corner of Ann Street, was the building of the New York *Tribune.* Brian saw that there was an immense crowd gathered in the streets about it—a still, ominous-looking crowd, pushing sullenly forward to get a glimpse of the placards of news in the lower windows.

There was a certain element in the city which had worked itself up, or had been worked up by agitators, over the rumor that the negroes were to be emancipated. A fear had been engendered that, in this event, neither person nor property nor the honor of their womanhood would be safe. Horrible pictures had been implanted in the minds of the ignorant of a world overrun and devastated by hordes of black freedmen, who would reduce the social sys-

tem to chaos and rule by right of numbers and brute strength.

Brian supposed that the news which was holding the crowd in such sullen, repressed stillness was a confirmation of the rumor of emancipation; but as he shouldered his way along he began to hear on all sides the word "draft" in muttered and rebellious tones.

So there was to be a draft! Soldiers were needed at the front, while his regiment was attending upon the mayor and policing mass meetings! Parlor soldiers! He began to share the indignation of the crowd. With the sublime egotism of youth he felt that if the gallant Tenth were ordered to the front, things would be settled in short order.

Suddenly the hot, fierce note of a fire bell was on the air. At once, as if it had been a signal, the sullen crowd through which Brian was pushing became a seething, yelling mob of rioters. With the suddenness of a feat of legerdemain, a fright-

ened negro was lifted for a moment above the heads and shoulders of the crowd, his face ashen, his mouth stretched in an agonized yell. In another moment, it seemed, a rope had been produced, and the negro was hanging by the neck to a lamp-post, while the crowd swirled and bumped against his dangling legs as he writhed in his death agony.

Brian was carried along with the mob. So tightly was he hemmed in that he could not reach the pistol at his belt. He thrust with his elbows and knees, shouting for order—futile shouts and ludicrous, in the face of the mad excitement which had seized the mob.

When at length he had fought his way free, he stood for a moment on the steps of the Chemical Bank, trying to regain his breath and to collect his thoughts. He was bruised and bleeding, and there was a wild ringing in his ears. About him were dinning bells and the summoning sound of trumpets, and here and there a glow of fire

and columns of smoke. Not one fire, but a dozen, had been simultaneously kindled by incendiaries, who had been waiting for the signal of the announcement of the draft.

Running and stumbling, and being caught constantly in pools and eddies of excited rioters, somehow Brian reached the armory. He was immediately ordered, with a squad, to the street-car barns. They were to board a car, ride down into the midst of the turmoil, and attempt to quiet it by a show of authority. He had strict order not to fire upon the crowd except in case of extremity.

Within half an hour his men were stationed, kneeling upon the seats of a little car, with a rifle protruding from each window. Upon the top there were more men, seated back to back, their firearms ready, with nervous fingers upon the triggers.

Brian stood upon the front platform, beside the terrified driver, his pistol in his hand. He felt strangely calm, and a little inclined to laugh at the humor of his strange entrance into the war—upon a street car.

The car rattled rapidly down town. Soon they were in the thick of it, progressing slowly through a dense crowd, which fell back a bit and was quiet for the moment, daunted by the appearance of armed authority. Brian ordered the driver to stop. Leaning forward, he shouted, haranguing the crowd, bidding them remember that they were Americans—that the President expected every man to do his duty.

He got no further in his speech than that. A disgusted "Yah!" sounded from a hundred throats, and a big fellow in a leather apron sprang forward and struck one of the horses a stunning blow over the head with his cudgel. The poor beast staggered and fell, bringing his fellow down with him.

Brian gave the order to fire over the heads of the rioters, who backed away at the sound of the volley. Then, seeing its harmless intent, they surged back with a yell of derision, and enveloped the little

car like a swarm of ants overrunning the dead body of a beetle.

The soldiers fought valiantly, but they were only twenty men to hundreds, and in less time than it takes to tell they were overpowered. Their rifles were wrested from them. Some of them were murdered in cold blood and hanged upon lamp-posts or street signs, beside the bodies of negroes.

A few of the soldiers escaped, Brian among them, fighting their way through the crowd with their fists, and helped by the gathering darkness.

All night the riot raged, and far into the following day. It was about noon when Brian, who had not slept or eaten, was ordered off duty for rest. He could find no rest, however, before assuring himself of the safety of Miss Van Studdiford, who was alone in a part of the town where there had been many fires.

When he reached their house, he found it deserted; but upon the hall table there was a note telling him that Mr. Cutting had

sent his landau for Miss Van Studdiford, and that she was staying at the house on Washington Square until the riot should be quelled.

Walking as if in a hypnotic trance, Brian made his way toward the Cutting residence. His uniform was soiled and torn, his face blackened by smoke and smeared with blood. He noted subconsciously the devastation through which he went—smoking and blackened ruins, where yesterday there had been tall and stately buildings; benches upset in the parks, and trampled grass; ghastly black bodies hanging from posts and street signs—bodies which no one had dared to cut down; scattered groups of yelling, wild-eyed rioters, not yet satiated with their triumph.

It was all like a mad, impossible dream to Brian as he stumbled along, his only thought to be assured of the safety of those he loved before seeking rest or food.

Washington Square was practically deserted, and the barracks were empty, ex-

cept for a few men left on guard. It seemed peaceful and quiet there, and Brian felt an almost irresistible impulse to sink upon the trampled turf and surrender himself to sleep.

Then, suddenly, he heard the sinister howl of an unbridled mob, the hateful sound which had been in his ears all night. Around the corner from Fifth Avenue he saw a group of men running in pursuit of a negro, who carried a basket from which articles were falling as he ran. It was old Joe, the Cuttings' butler, who had ventured out for provisions!

With a start Brian awoke from his walking trance. Yelling, he sprang across the street and stood between the fleeing negro and his pursuers.

The mob held back a bit, daunted for a moment by the pistol which Brian flourished. Old Joe gained the stoop, stumbled up the steps, and fumbled at the front door.

The happenings of the next few moments were so rapid that Brian was scarcely con-

scious of them. In swift succession came the sudden rush of the thwarted mob, his threat to shoot, the stinging impact of a stone upon his cheek, the click of a trigger, and the sickening realization that his weapon was empty. He backed up the steps. He could hear Joe's hoarse, strangled breathing behind him. The negro could not get the key into the lock, being too much overcome by fright to control his trembling hands.

Some soldiers were running across the street, but already a cudgel was poised above Brian's head. He heard a woman's scream, and two slender arms were extended over him, as if in benediction—two arms which received the impact of the descending cudgel with a sickening sound of breaking bones. Then Brian lapsed into unconsciousness.

When he came to his senses, he found himself lying upon a sofa in the Cuttings' drawing-room. He looked up into Edith's eyes, which were brimming with tears.

Aunt Van stood beside him with something in a glass, her hand trembling so that the liquid was spilled upon the floor.

Edith put her arm about his shoulders and raised him a little, laying her soft cheek against his bruised face.

He saw a group over by the front window—Dr. Elbridge, and Mr. and Mrs. Cutting, and a little woman who sat there, very still and white, while her arm was being bandaged.

Brian tried to struggle to his feet, but found himself too weak to rise. He saw that the little woman upon whom the doctor was working had her eyes upon him, with a glad light in them. She seemed totally oblivious to what they were doing to her arm.

"Ellen saved your life, Brian," said Edith. "She took the blow upon her poor arm. Oh, dear Ellen!"

She ran across the room and sank upon her knees before her old nurse.

With an effort Brian rose and followed

her, his knees trembling like those of a child learning to walk. Miss Van Studdiford clung to his arm. She seemed to want to hold him back.

"There, there, Edith!" said Mr. Cutting, a trifle testily. "How is the doctor to finish if you crowd about like this?"

"I'm all through," said the doctor, stepping back to yield his place to Brian. "I'll say for Ellen that she's the gamest wounded soldier I've ever handled."

" 'Tis nothing," said Ellen. "I scarce feel the pain now."

"You shouldn't have—why did you?" stammered Brian. "You might have been killed!"

Ellen looked down upon her arm. She couldn't meet the grateful, concerned look in the boy's eyes.

"What's a broken arm?" she said. "My Miss Edith's heart would have been broken, otherwise."

"And that's true," said the doctor. "Even that glancing blow, which she de-

flected, left a pretty bad gash on your forehead, young man."

Brian put his hand up to the bandage upon his head. He had not been conscious of it before, but there was a dull, aching pain there.

"The full force of that cudgel would have cracked your skull," said the doctor emphatically. "You certainly owe your life to this little woman!"

At this Miss Van Studdiford began to cry. In fact, she became hysterical, and it required the attention of the doctor and of every one else in the room to quiet and soothe her.

CHAPTER XIII

BY noon of the following day the city had been brought to its normal state by the help of emergency troops which had been hastened there from a camp in New Jersey.

Permission had been gained for Brian to stay at the Cuttings' house for rest and recuperation, and Mrs. Cutting had invited a few friends to an informal luncheon, at which the engagement between Brian and her daughter was to be announced. Social activities were not entirely suspended at that time in New York, the war not having touched many families closely as yet.

The luncheon was to be a small affair, Judge Deems, Dr. Elbridge, and a few young friends of Edith's being the only guests outside of the family connections.

The table in the big dining room was

gayly and patriotically decorated with flags, and there were many flowers from the small conservatory that jutted out in a bow from the back of the room.

Brian, feeling very little the worse for his experiences during the riot, was seated at Mrs. Cutting's right. He still wore a bandage about his head, and rather ruefully received the congratulations of his friends at having come through his first battle with so little hurt. He felt a little ashamed that it had been a cudgel in the hands of a rabble, rather than a rifle or sword in the hands of the enemy, which had left its mark upon him.

He wished that Aunt Van, who was seated upon his right, would not so often call attention to him by solicitous inquiries as to how he felt, and whether he was sure he was strong enough to sit up.

He thought about Ellen, whom he had not seen since the day before. He felt that she should be brought in and hailed as the real hero of the occasion.

The luncheon party began to be rather gay. There was wine, most of the guests were young, and the war seemed very far away.

On the appearance of the dessert, Mr. Cutting rose with a wineglass in his hand, and paused, smiling, as old Joe approached the group of servants assembled in the doorway. They had been sent for to drink a toast, with the guests, to the health and happiness of the young couple, as was the custom in that family. They stood in a giggling, embarrassed little group as Joe passed the tray with glasses among them.

"Friends," said Mr. Cutting, when the glasses were all filled, "it gives me great pleasure to announce the engagement of my daughter, Edith, to our gallant young friend, Lieutenant Van Studdiford. I think I may say without undue complacency that the contemplated union of members of two old and honorable families"—he waved his glass in the direction of Miss Van Studdiford, who looked very uncomfortable—

"is most gratifying to Mrs. Cutting and myself."

The thoughts of every one at the table went to young Richard Cutting, the son, who was not present at the luncheon. He had married beneath him. His wife, the daughter of a small tradesman, had never been recognized by the family, which had an inordinate pride of caste.

"I ask you all to join me," Mr. Cutting went on, "in a toast to the health, long life, and happiness of my daughter and my future son-in-law!"

As the glasses were raised and drained, there came a long and imperative ringing of the front doorbell. It sounded ominous, somehow, coming at that moment.

It *was* ominous! An orderly had come with the news that Lee had invaded Pennsylvania, that the Tenth Regiment had been ordered to the front, and that Lieutenant Van Studdiford was to report at the armory at once.

It was as if a bomb had exploded in that

safe, luxurious room. Consternation struck them all into a shocked silence. The enemy in Pennsylvania! The war so near at last! There was no sound, for a moment, as faces grew white and frightened eyes stared at the bringer of such evil news.

Suddenly Miss Van Studdiford shrieked and threw her arms about Brian, crying that she would not let him go. He tried to comfort her. Then, putting her aside into sympathetic arms, he faced Edith, who stood looking at him dumbly, stricken, trying to call a brave smile to her stiffened lips.

As Brian took her in his arms, over her head he saw a white face which seemed to stand out in unnatural distinctness from the blur of other white faces. It was Ellen's face, old, lined, wistful, with a look in her eyes which he could scarcely meet for the pain and suffering that it expressed.

Scarcely realizing what he was doing, he kissed Edith, surrendered her to her father's arms, and went toward the old woman by

the door. He was drawn by an irresistible impulse, not knowing what he meant to do or say.

"You—you—" he stammered. "You mustn't leave her. She loves you. They said you were going to leave. She cried about it. She doesn't want you to go. You won't, will you?"

Ellen shook her head dumbly.

"I'd like to think she had you if—if anything happened," he went on. "She—"

He could find no further words. Ellen's eyes were upon him with a hungry, possessive, yet renouncing gaze, which choked the words in his throat. They stood there gazing at each other.

Miss Van Studdiford tugged at Brian's arm. He looked down upon the anxious old face without clearly recognizing, at first, who it was that claimed his attention. There was a look in her eyes which he had never seen before—a new light of unselfish impulse.

"I can't stand it!" she said, not looking

at him, but at Ellen. "You—you—it isn't fair! The whole burden! Tell him! Tell him!"

With a tremendous effort Ellen gathered her scattered wits together. She saw that Miss Van Studdiford was upon the point of ruining the whole work of her long years of self-denial, and of shaming Brian by betraying his humble parentage before that proud company.

"You must stand it, madam," she said, purposely misinterpreting the import of Miss Van Studdiford's words. "Your son must do his duty. Go, go quickly," she said to Brian. "Do not prolong your mother's suffering!"

"Yes! Yes! I must go at once," answered Brian, wondering at the commanding look this humble woman had given the other. "Don't fret," he said to Miss Van Studdiford. "I'll be back before you know it—mother!"

He turned and hastily shook the hands of the guests, and then, with another kiss

and embrace for Edith and his adopted mother, he went hastily from the room. In a moment the front door banged, and he was gone.

Every one gathered about Edith and Miss Van Studdiford, trying to comfort and reassure them.

Ellen crept to the front window. Was that Brian striding across the park? She wasn't sure—there were so many blue uniforms and sturdy figures there.

"Ellen! Ellen!" Edith was beside her. Ellen put her good arm about the girl, who nestled to her side. "Say you'll stay, Ellen! Say you won't leave me now!"

"I'll stay, deary. Yes, I'll stay!"

They stood there for a long time, and then Mr. Cutting came and took Edith away. He said the carriage was ready. They were going to drive down to the ferry to see the regiment depart.

Presently Ellen stood again at the window, alone. She saw them driving away—Mr. and Mrs. Cutting, Miss Van Studdi-

ford, and Edith. Then she went painfully upstairs, where she put on her shabby old bonnet and shawl. She, too, meant to see the regiment go away.

She felt strangely calm as she gave orders in the kitchen for dinner that night, and then went quietly out by the garden gate. No one noticed the shabby figure hastening down Broadway, jostled and shoved this way and that by the crowd, which grew more and more dense as she made her way down town. On Cortlandt Street, which led to the ferry, the sidewalks were packed with excited people, waiting to see the Tenth march by.

Ellen wormed her way through the press, guarding her bandaged arm as well as she could, though several times it was severely pressed upon and hurt. Soon her shawl was pulled away from her shoulders. Mechanically she grapsed the end of it in her free hand.

There was a keen wind blowing from the river, but she did not feel it. Her bonnet

was knocked to the back of her head, and wisps of gray hair blew over her eyes. She was conscious of nothing but the determination to get to the end of the street, where she might gain a vantage point from which to look upon her boy's face once again.

She heard the shrill sound of fifes and the roll of drums, and felt the crowd pack more and more tightly about her. The regiment was coming!

She was being hurt, terribly hurt, by the pressure, but she was scarcely conscious of it. She could see nothing but heads and shoulders, being a little woman.

There was a sound of marching feet, and a band broke into a gay tune. The crowd squeezed closer and more close. A woman screamed and fainted and went down, unheeded by the crowd. Ellen, half conscious, grasped at the arm of a big man in front of her to keep herself from falling, too.

A good-natured face looked down upon her.

"Hey, old lady, hey!" the man shouted. "This is no place for you!"

"My son!" she gasped. "My son! I must see him!"

The man thrust out with his big arms, elbowing right and left to make room for her, calling:

"Easy there! Let the old lady by! Somebody's mother wants to get a look! Easy there!"

Sheltering her with his great bulk, he pushed Ellen through the crowd to the edge of the curb.

Many soldiers were marching by. They looked dim and shadowy to her. She wondered confusedly why it had grown dark so suddenly.

People were cheering. Hats were flying in the air. Flowers were falling under the feet of the marching men. Dim soldiers were passing by, all looked alike to Ellen —pale and shadowy, as if in a dream.

Company after company passed. The little figure lurched against the big man,

who put his arm about her, to keep her from being pushed from the curb.

As she rested there in the hollow of that strong arm, there came to her a burst of glorious music. A great chorus it seemed, shouting:

"Hallelujah! Hallelujah!"

There was a bright light all about her, and the arm that held her so closely was her own boy's arm. How good it was to feel the embrace for which she had hungered for so many years!

It seemed to her that he lifted her face to his and gazed long into her eyes, and that the name "Mother Machree" formed upon his lips.

The moment was pure bliss!

"This is enough!" she said. "This pays for all!"

"Easy there! Easy there!" said the big man, as he felt the little figure crumple within his arms. "Easy there! The old lady has fainted!"

After the regiment had passed by, a doc-

tor forced his way through the crowd to where the big man still held Ellen's slender form. He looked at the peaceful face with the joyous smile upon it, and took off his hat.

"It isn't a faint," he said. "She's gone."

"Gone!" said the man who held her. "I wonder what she saw! That look on her face! It can't be so bad, going like that."

THE END

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